



Upcoming Events

Student Free Day

Date: Monday 28 April -
Sunday 28 April

Venue: St Thomas School -
Goodwood

Save the date - Gala 2025

Date: Saturday 22 March

Time: 10:00am - 3:00pm

Venue: St Thomas School -
Goodwood



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our staff, students and families.

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From the Principal



As this term draws to a close it has been wonderful to reflect back on the many wonderful events and achievements of Term One. Since our last newsletter, we enjoyed a most successful Gala, thanks to a huge combined effort within our community. A special mention to our Gala committee, with the generous leadership of Trish Jarvis, supported by Lauren Waters, Rosie King and staff members Sarah Burns and Paul Mensforth, together with our incredible Stall Holders. This was a truly wonderful community event, and the generosity of all our families, through sponsorship and attendance was fantastic!

This week we gather each morning for Holy Week prayer, coming together to learn more about the life of Jesus and his final days with his disciples. Then when we return next term, we will celebrate the Resurrection with a Mass to acknowledge the season of Easter. Through this we are reminded of the powerful messages of Hope and promise of new life that Easter brings. My hope for all in our community is that this season of Easter is one filled with joy, new beginnings, new moments of life lived to the full for each and everyone.

April is Autism Awareness Month, with World Autism Day having occurred on 2nd April. This day was sanctioned by the UN to recognise and celebrate the rights of people on the autism spectrum. With 290,000 Australians identifying as autistic, and 90% of those being young people aged 5-25, there is much to celebrate with each individual having unique qualities, and strengths. I have read recently a number of valuable communications around this and wanted also to bring it to your attention. Sue Larkey, author and specialist Autism educator, prefers the terms 'advocate, ally and understand' over 'awareness'. This month is all about celebrating and advocating for neurodiversity. Being aware is a great initial step, but embedding this awareness into further learning and action is the next logical step. We must have awareness in order to understand, be an ally and advocate. Sue's quote sums this up nicely, "Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, belonging is having that voice be heard." At St Thomas we believe that all children are unique, precious individuals, with limitless potential and our mission is to help them thrive. We hope that our inclusive school will prepare all our children to contribute to and participate in a society that is truly inclusive. In a letter to all students, our Executive Director of Catholic Education, Dr Neil McGoran writes,

"Dear children and young people,

You are capable and competent people, learners and leaders. You are made in God's image and are deeply valued for who you are – in and for the world God desires.

You have capabilities that you can use to help you live, learn and lead. Recognising and developing your capabilities enables you to be comfortable and confident in who you are, and ready to make a difference in our world."

These words are true for all at St Thomas. It is our mission to nurture and care for all our students, to be aware, understand, advocate and be allies for neurodiversity. I encourage everyone to take that next step towards furthering our own understanding and experience of neurodiversity, for the benefit of all and enrichment of our own lives.

As we round off this term, I thank all our students, staff and families for a most wonderful term of learning and partnership. As we look forwards to next term, I take this opportunity to welcome back Mrs Natalie Catinari from her Leave, and thank Mrs Low for her care of Year 2CS. I extend best wishes to Mr Sebestyen Maglai for his Leave during Term 2, and Mr Mark Nelson and Mrs Laura Donnellan who will be away for parts of next term. We welcome Mrs Karen Lintern who will provide continuous care for these classes during this time.

As for a Canteen update, this holidays will see a refurbishment of our Canteen facilities, which is very exciting. As you know, Rory's service concludes with us and we will be moving to an internally run canteen service. These plans are well under way, but please be aware that we will not have a regular canteen service for at least the first half of Term 2. We are putting in place an alternative, special order for 2 days per week in the interim. More details will be available on QKR as soon as this is set up.

A reminder that all active volunteers at St Thomas need to be registered with all documentation current and processed. There will be more Volunteer Induction sessions offered in Term Two. Please look out for these on the Term Two calendar and be sure to attend if you are still needing to complete an induction.

I wish all our families a safe, relaxing and enjoyable holiday and look forward to seeing you all back with us at the start of Term Two.

Belinda Burford

Principal

From the Deputy Principal



EVERYONE BELONGS

'EVERYONE BELONGS... this was the powerful message we celebrated last week as a school, as we acknowledged National Harmony Day. The school was a sea of orange with the addition of a variety of cultural dress and colours. Students participated in wonderful activities, celebrating our cultural diversity. We thank Liz Calahan, Leanne Michalik and Alissa Baker for their support of the day's activities and special lunch. We also saw generous donations from families to our Project Compassion appeal on this day with our annual Water Challenge, which will contribute greatly to our Lenten goal to care for those most in need. But, it was the classroom learning and rich conversations across the school that really celebrated the message that 'EVERYONE BELONGS!'

There were stories shared, family histories explored and beautiful artworks created- all of which reminded each of us that our individual story is important; and so too is our shared story in this community.

Our community draws together families from every continent (except Antarctica!) and we are so proud of this rich cultural heritage. We will continue to celebrate our diversity and interconnectedness!

BEHAVIOUR EDUCATION- THE FIVE POINT SCALE

Our behaviour education is based on the belief that we are ALL made in the image of God- and therefore, every person you will ever meet has infinite worth... and so do you! At St Thomas, we strive to work together to create and maintain a safe environment where everyone is reminded that they belong and matter absolutely. But no one is perfect and sometimes we make mistakes- so it is important that we take the time to restore and repair our connections with others- and reflect on what we can do better. This is the core of our culture of forgiveness.

Our business is the education of these precious children, and like all children- mistakes will happen. Our role as educators, in partnership, is to ensure that when mistakes do happen, they become rich learning opportunities to help each of our children grow and thrive.

An important aspect of our behaviour education at St Thomas, supported by our Visible Wellbeing framework, is the acknowledgement of our emotional state when making decisions. We feel before we think, which means, more often than not, our actions are driven by the emotion we are feeling at the time. Our emotional state, and more importantly our ability to control this, is key to making good choices in any situation.

Can you recall the footage of the very ordinary situation between Will Smith and Chris Rock at the 2022 Oscars, which included Will storming onto the stage and punching Chris across the face. This situation echoes the need, even as adults, to acknowledge our emotional state before acting in the world. Sometimes, in our modern day lives, these acts of emotionally charged aggression can be delivered in the form of emails and comments into inboxes and social media platforms. The management of our emotional state is part of our daily human struggle. Some days it is easy and some days more challenging.

One excellent teaching tool to explore this is the 'Incredible 5 Point Scale.' This scale offers a rating for how we are feeling, from a Number 1 (calm and happy); to a Number 5 (angry and out of control.) When we start to use this scale, we can better read our emotional state and consider strategies to help us move down the scale, especially in times of high stress.

When we are at a Number 5, we can lose control and say and do things which we will regret. At this level, when we are not in control, we can do great damage to our relationships and to those around us. So what is most important is what we do when we are at a Number 4 on the scale and what we do to ensure we don't 'cross the line' into Number 5. As inappropriate as the joke was, perhaps Will Smith needed to use some calming strategies so he didn't move to a Number 5, lose his control and publicly act in a way that he soon regretted. Perhaps we can all reflect on a time when we too have let ourselves move into a Number 5 and said, did or wrote something which caused harm.

What a great conversation to continue with our learners! I have included a copy of our current 5 Point Scale for your information. It is also possible to create a personalised version with children which reminds them of their preferred calming strategies. "It looks like you are at a 4. Like your chart says, I think it's time to go for a walk or jump on the trampoline?"

[The 5 Point Scale Poster.pdf](#)

Go gently,

Paul Mensforth

Deputy Principal

From the REC



Dear Students and Families,

On behalf of Caritas Australia, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the students who participated in our Project Compassion

initiative—whether by returning their donation boxes, submitting Water Challenge slips, or making contributions through the QR code.

Your generosity and compassion have made a meaningful difference in the lives of those who need it most, and we are truly grateful for your support.

If you still have charity money at home, you are welcome to return it at any time during Term Two. Every contribution—no matter how big or small—helps us continue our vital work in supporting vulnerable communities around the world.

Thank you once again for your kindness and commitment to creating positive change.

As many of you know, I will be taking long service leave in Term Two to visit my, and my wife's remaining family in Hungary.

I deeply appreciate all the support and contributions you've offered throughout the term—through liturgies, Masses, fundraising events, the Sacrament Program, and especially the Holy Week liturgies.

I look forward to reconnecting with you all in Term Three.

Warm regards,

Sebestyen Maglai

REC

Finance



FEE INFORMATION

Finance

Reminder - Term 1 School Fees are now overdue. Prompt payment is appreciated.

If you are paying by instalments note payment dates:-

Due dates are Friday Week 5 each term.

- Term 1 due 1st March
- Term 2 due 30th May
- Term 3 due 22nd August
- Term 4 due 14th November

For all account queries or copies of fee statements contact Jodi Jansons- Business Manager

Email accounts@stg.catholic.edu.au Ph: 8177 8112.

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Sports News



Our Yr 4, 5 & 6 cricketers had an interrupted but fun cricket season. Thanks to Matt Gale, Kyle Kucharski and Claudia Pace for coaching and organising the team each week. Our cricketers displayed great sportsmanship and cricket skills for every game they managed to play!

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Please access the link below for the latest news from Camp Australia for the upcoming school holidays

[View this article online to read more](#)

Emmaus Christmas Mass Times

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

TUESDAY 24 DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY MASSES

6.00pm - St Therese, Col Light Gardens *incl nativity*

6.30pm - Our Lady of Dolours, Kingswood *incl nativity*

7.30pm - Holy Cross, Goodwood - **OUTDOORS : Please bring a chair.**

12 midnight - Holy Cross Church *(with choir music from 11.30pm)*

WEDNESDAY 25 DECEMBER: CHRISTMAS DAY MASS

9.00am - Our Lady of Dolours, Kingswood ONLY

THERE ARE NO CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES at ST THERESE OR HOLY CROSS

WEDNESDAY 1 JANUARY, 2025 - NEW YEAR'S DAY MASS

9.30am - Our Lady of Dolours, Kingswood

The Emmaus Parish invites everyone to their Christmas masses please see times and venues above.

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Library Book Returns



Please return all library books ASAP

School Office Closure



Season of Creation 2024



Please [click here](#) for more information.

Principals of the Day



At St Thomas we have Principals for a Day. These are creative and driven students that sent in an application and got chosen to be Principal because of their display of our 5 Learner Dispositions. Brave, Connected, Gritty, Reflective, and Creative. Our names are Georgia and Felicity, we are the Principals for a Day this year.

I'm Felicity, my application was an essay. I listed how my personality and work ethic fit into all of the values we have here at St Thomas. Not only did I list my character strengths, I also listed some of my ideas like reading out the roll backwards sometimes or having a short art session at the end of each day.

I'm Georgia and my application was a video. It was a P.O.V from the Learner Dispositions. They were arguing about who was the best and why they thought that they were the best. I also included my accomplishments such as ballet performances and awards or Tournament of Minds.

I'm Felicity, I really wanted to be Principal for a Day because it is my last year at St Thomas before high school, and I wanted to take every opportunity to go out of my comfort zone this year. It also seemed really fun to not go to class and be a Principal for a Day!

I'm Georgia, I think I wanted to Principal for a Day because it's a chance to show some leadership. Especially because it's so close to the end of the year and I'm going into Year Six next year. I also wanted to be picked so that I could show my creativity through my application; and I did get to do that.

We had a great time as Principals and we are so grateful for this opportunity. So we would like to encourage everyone to try and send in a application next year because it is an awesome time and also thank you so much to Ms Buford and Mr Mensforth for letting us steal their job!

Felicity Welch and Georgia Banytis

Congratulations Chelsea



Congratulations to Chelsea (Yr 5) for her successful entry into the national Young ICT Robotics Competition for 2024! Chelsea was awarded 1st Prize for SA entries and 2nd Prize for Australia-wide entries in Year 5-6 division. Chelsea was inspired by an idea from Gardening Australia and cleverly designed a prototype of an automatic mixing bin with a timer, voice recordings and motion sensor and robotic mixing stick. This project took Chelsea around 3-4 months to complete and we are so proud of her for this fine achievement!