



2022 Parent Handbook

St Mary's Altona

VISION Statement

We are a
welcoming and supportive
Catholic Community.

We proclaim the
presence of Jesus Christ
in all people.

We value and celebrate our
faith, diversity, individuality
and life-long learning.

In the Spirit of Mary MacKillop.



St Mary's School Prayer

Loving God,

At St Mary's we proclaim your presence through
justice, love and peace for all.

Thank you for guiding us in our love of
learning and play.

Bless everyone in our school community
and help us work together to
serve you and serve one another.

Amen.

Mary, Help of Christians.

Pray for us

St. Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Pray for us



Absences

Attendance at school is compulsory and therefore we must have notification explaining any absence a child may have from school. This is a legal requirement. To record an absence, you will need to complete the Google form which can be found on the school website home page \Absentee Note tab or via the School Updated App. These notifications are kept indefinitely by the school. Please do not ring the school to inform us of an absence.

Anaphylaxis

We have students in our school who are anaphylactic, which means they have serious allergic reactions. We also have students who have severe allergies but are not anaphylactic. These students not only have allergies to nuts but also to eggs, shellfish & white fish, salmon, kiwi fruit and legumes among other things. If these students eat or in some cases, touch any food products that contain any of these foods or traces of these foods they could be put into a life threatening situation. We are asking for your cooperation, that NO sharing of food takes place in any class, but particularly if one of these students is in your child's class. These students are well aware of what they can eat but if you reinforce with your own child that these children are not able to 'eat' everything that other children can and to please not share food with them. On special occasion days e.g. birthdays, class teachers will have a 'treat' that these students can eat. These treats are supplied by the family at the start of each year. A current list of these students' classes are shared with the community at the beginning of each year.

Arrival

Each morning the following 3 entrances open at 8:30am:

- Church gate (Railway Street between the front building and the Church)
- Sargood Street
- McBain Street

Parents can enter the school with their child and wait on the netball court for the first bell to ring at 8:45am.

Children in the Junior school can play on the Junior playground (Sargood Street) under the direct supervision of their parent/carer while waiting for the bell.

To encourage independence, we do not have parents entering school buildings/hallways before school.

Brain Food

Students are encouraged to bring fruit, vegetables, dried fruit, etc. to snack on

during the day. This food needs to be peeled/cut up ready to eat. (This is additional to their morning tea snack and lunch). They are also encouraged to bring a drink bottle filled with water to keep with them in class. These items will keep student's energy levels high and help them to remain well hydrated. Flavoured drinks or juices are suitable for snacks but not to be drunk in class time.

Canteen

The canteen is open 3 days per week (Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays). Lunch orders can be placed on these days. The canteen menu is available on our website. Lunch orders should be sent to school in a labelled bag (usually paper) and placed in the class tub.

It is also open at recess and lunch for students to purchase snacks.

Class Teachers

Teachers are always here to discuss your child's progress at St. Mary's. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher directly if you have any concerns. Please be aware though, that teachers do, on some days, have work commitments directly after school i.e. Staff meetings, Professional Learning Team meetings, etc. and at 8:45 am, teachers must commence their day's work, so making an appointment at a mutually convenient time is sometimes necessary.

Communication

Communication is an essential element in your child's education. It is important that the school communicates with you and that you communicate with the school. Education of your child is a partnership between the family (home) and St. Mary's School. In order to maximise the benefits for your child we must communicate effectively.

The school communicates with parents in the following ways:

***Operoo**

Operoo (formerly known as CareMonkey) gives parents control over their child's medical and emergency information. Parents can easily ensure all important information required by the school about their child is up-to-date. Another great feature of Operoo is the ability to send notes out to parents with information about upcoming events or permission notes to attend excursions or camps. For more information go to:

<https://www.operoo.com/>

*** Seesaw**

Seesaw is an app that is used primarily at St Mary's to communicate the learning that takes place at school with those at home. Families can have a number of members connected to their child's Learning Journal. Here, members are able to see, like and comment on work, photos and videos. Another feature is the notifications or announcements feature. Using this feature, teachers are able to communicate to whole classes important messages, preview the week to come or send other general information. There is also a message feature where staff and families can communicate with one another.

*** Email**

Staff can also be contacted by email, so if it is more convenient to use email, then please do so. We will acknowledge your email A.S.A.P. You will receive your child's teacher's email address as well as the email addresses of the specialist teachers. Our email addresses follows the same structure: fristinitialsurname@smaltona.catholic.edu.au eg sriccardi@smaltona.catholic.edu.au

Your child's teacher is your first point of call and should always be contacted as a first option. Our school email address is: principal@smaltona.catholic.edu.au

*** Facebook**

Our school Facebook page (St. Mary's Primary School Altona) can be accessed via a link from our website. It is regularly updated with photos and information. New parents to the school need to read and abide by our Facebook Code of Conduct. This can be accessed from our school website, under "About Us" \ "School Policies and Procedures".

*** Information Evenings**

From time to time the school will conduct evenings for parents on specific topics. These may be curriculum related, on Religious Education/Sacraments or simply administrative. We encourage all parents to attend these evenings whenever they occur. You will find it much easier to help your child if you are well informed about what is going on.

*** Open Door Policy**

The Office window is always open and parents are encouraged to come and see us about any concerns or problems that you may have. If you wish

to meet with the Principal an appointment can be made by contacting the school office on 9398 4842.

*** Newsletter**

A digital format newsletter is produced every Friday afternoon and it is also published on the school website in the NEWS tab. The contents of this service may vary week to week but include sections such as our Principal's Message, Wellbeing, Education in Faith, Uniform Shop, community announcements and links to our regional highschoools. These sections will include reminders, articles to be read and general information about the school. These will come to you in an email format. In order to receive these newsletters you will need to subscribe via the Subscribe tab on the School Website home page. All families need to subscribe as we also send other updates and news out using this system. Google forms can also be completed online and submitted electronically.

*** School Website www.smaltona.catholic.edu.au**

The School Newsletter and school forms can be accessed via our website. The School website is updated regularly with new information, dates, upcoming events and photos of school events. We encourage parents and children to refer to the website as the first point of call to check on information, dates and times, etc. before contacting the school. Our absence form and school interview bookings can be accessed from the school home page.

***UPDAT-ED App**

The School App, Updat-ed, is available via the App Store or Google Play. The app is great for sending out alerts and reminders with one of its best features being the ability for you to save events directly into your phone's calendar. Our absence form is also available through our school app.

*** Phone**

Our telephone number is 03 9398 4842. If you cannot physically call in to arrange an appointment then please call us. We encourage all parents to call us if you have any concerns or if the situation in the home changes in any way. Often changes at home are reflected in behaviour and attitude at school. We need to know if a child's circumstances have changed.

Dismissal

The school gates open at 2:45 on Mondays and 3:05 on each other day. Parents may enter the school grounds at this time and wait for the bell to ring at the end of the day.

Parents are not permitted to enter classrooms or buildings at this time as students are packing up and preparing to go home and hallways can get busy and congested during these times.

Early Dismissal

There may be times when you need to collect your child during the school day. To minimise interruptions to the class you are asked to arrange these either directly before or after scheduled break times. Please inform the class teacher that your child will be leaving early. You will need to come into the office and sign out your child using the iPad.

Late Arrival

Any children that arrive at school after 9.00am will need to report to the school office to receive a late slip and the office staff will amend the class roll. If a child arrives at the classroom after this time without a late slip, the teacher will ask them to go to the office to receive one.

Lost property

Any lost property (without a name) is placed in the Lost Property tub located outside the staffroom. If staff find an item of clothing with a name, this is usually returned to the class.

Parent/Child/Teacher Conferences

Towards the end of second term mid-year reports are issued. At this time we schedule a Parent/Child/Teacher Conference where your child's progress is discussed in a formal setting. Appointments are made and you and your child are encouraged to attend these meetings. In Term One an opportunity is made for a get to know you chat. Additional parent/teacher contact can be requested by you and/or the classroom teacher at other times of the year as deemed necessary. The Booking link (Interviews) can be accessed from the School Website home page.

Parent Support Groups (PSGs)

Parent Support Group Meetings (PSGs) are held each term with the parents of students with additional learning needs. Parents will be notified via Operoo and bookings are done through our School Interview portal.

School Office Hours

The School Office is open each day between 8.30am and 4pm. There is an answering machine in operation outside these times. Please leave a message at other times when staff are unable to answer the telephone. The message will be actioned at the earliest opportunity. If you are running late to collect your child at the end of the school day, please telephone the School Office on 9398 4842 as early as possible.

Specialists

Our students participate in 4 specialist classes each week. These are:

- Visual Arts
- Performing Arts
- Physical Education
- AUSLAN (sign language)

Supervision & Safety

BEFORE SCHOOL: Supervision commences at 8.30 am. Children are to remain on or in the vicinity of the netball court and Junior Adventure Playground (Prep – Yr 2) as these are the only areas that we can adequately supervise. No children are to be on the basketball court, senior adventure playground and/or oval before school as there is no teacher supervision in this area. Children are not to be on the school grounds before 8.30 am. Students start school at 8.45am.

AFTER SCHOOL: There are two teachers on duty: one near the Junior Adventure Playground and Netball Court and the other near the Basketball Court. You can arrange to meet your children in any of these areas. Children whose parents are not present when they are dismissed are to assemble outside Prep B classroom and if they haven't been collected when the teacher supervision ends they will be brought into the school office to wait. If you arrive after the school gates are locked, please enter through the main school entrance to collect your child/ren.

No ball games or organised games are allowed BEFORE or AFTER school and all children who ride must dismount from their bikes, scooters etc before they enter/leave the school grounds.

Junior students (Years P-2) are permitted to play on the Junior playground before and after school when there is a parent/guardian actively supervising.

Middle and Senior students are permitted to play on the Senior playground until 3:35pm if there is a parent/guardian actively supervising.

After 3:35pm, the Senior playground is accessed by Camp Australia, our Out of School Hours Care program.

Timetable

Our day starts with the first bell going at 8:45am.

First block of learning:	8:45am - 11:00am
Recess:	11:00am - 11:30am
Middle block:	11:30am - 1:30pm
Lunch (eating in class):	1:30pm - 1:40pm
Lunch break:	1:40pm - 2:30pm
Afternoon block:	2:30pm - 3:20pm

Students finish at 3pm on Mondays. On these days, lunch starts and finishes 10 minutes earlier.

Prep students have Wednesdays off in February. In 2022 this excludes Wednesday 2nd February, when all students return to school.

Uniforms

All students are expected to be in full school uniform at all times, unless they have been instructed otherwise. Sports Uniforms which include runners and white socks with school logo should be worn on the day your child has Physical Education. For Inter-school Sport in Years 5/6, students wear their white polo instead of their team colours. Check your child/ren's specific class or level information sheet.

We are very proud of our uniform at St. Mary's and it should be worn with pride. Please make sure ALL JUMPERS, JACKETS & HATS are clearly marked with your child's name. A reminder that all children are required to wear hats when outside from the beginning of September till the end of April. No Hat, No Play! Sunglasses are a recommended item of school uniform, but are not compulsory.

Vaccination

At the time of printing this Handbook, any parents entering the school grounds for any reason other than dropping off/picking up or Prep Orientation sessions, are required to be vaccinated and present their vaccination certificate for sighting by

school staff. This requirement is subject to change based on Government advice.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

Any volunteers and helpers must have a current Working With Children Check and present this to the school before commencing. WWCCs are free for volunteers. For more information and to register for one, visit <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

Contact Us

93984842

Leadership

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