



St John the Baptist Primary School, Maitland



FAMILY HANDBOOK



We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands along the banks of the Hunter River, the Wonnarua people.

For thousands of years these peoples lived near the rivers and flood plains on which our school, St John's is located. Then, as now, it was a place where young people were taught, where stories were told and where the presence of the Creator God was known.

We are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique culture and ongoing spiritual relationships to the land, waters and their rich contributions to our communities and society.

We remember those who have gone before us and acknowledge their wisdom and tradition, as we also pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.



ST JOHN THE BAPTIST PRIMARY SCHOOL

OUR VISION STATEMENT

To develop moral, respectful and resilient children, proud of their Catholic heritage, who will find their place as contributing members of Australian society.

To be a community where Jesus Christ is at the Heart of all we do.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

- To provide opportunities for ALL students by being supportive and inclusive of their diverse learning endeavours, immersed in best educational practice that caters for their spiritual, emotional, academic, social and physical growth.
- To develop and maintain a strong Dominican charism relevant for our time, through a knowledge of our past, regular community prayer, celebration and worship.
- To enliven all families and children of our school community to embrace the Dominican way of Head, Heart and Hands consistent with our school motto: Truth and Forgiveness.

St John the Baptist School Prayer

St Johns is a family united as one,
May our school be a place of learning and fun.

Let our faith be shown by the way we care.
And long may we turn to you in prayer.

To keep us truthful and to forgive,
To show love for others in the way that we live.

O Jesus we pray to you this day,
With St John,
St Dominic and
St Mary of the Cross.
Amen.





Welcome to St John the Baptist Primary School!

It is with great joy that I welcome you to St John the Baptist Primary School, a community where faith, learning, and student wellbeing are at the heart of everything we do. Since 1856, our school has provided a supportive, spiritual, and student-centred environment, deeply rooted in the Charisms of the Dominican Order. We continue to live out the four pillars of the Dominican tradition—Study, Prayer, Community, and Service—guiding our actions and our shared mission.

At St John the Baptist, we are committed to fostering a culture that prioritises the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of every student. Grounded in Catholic values, we celebrate the unique gifts of each child and nurture their spiritual, emotional, and academic growth. Our school motto, 'Truth and Forgiveness', challenges us to be welcoming, inclusive, and compassionate, creating an environment where all members of our community feel supported and inspired to flourish.

In an ever-changing and complex world, we hold high expectations for all students, striving to provide a quality education that equips them to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow. We honour each child's individual journey, building on their diverse backgrounds, family contexts, and unique experiences to help them reach their God-given potential. Together, we aim to inspire a lifelong love of learning, a deep sense of faith, and a commitment to serving others.

In 2026, we proudly celebrate 188 years of education in Maitland. As we embark on this new chapter of our journey, I warmly invite you to join us in shaping the future of St John the Baptist Primary School. Together, we can ensure our students are equipped to thrive academically, socially, and spiritually, with a strong foundation of faith and values to guide them.

I commend this Parent Handbook to you and hope you find it both helpful and informative. Should you have any questions or require further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

May God bless you and your family as we walk this exciting path together.

Blessings,
Kate Ferguson
Principal



KEY DATES & CONTACTS

ADDRESS: 12 Victoria Street Maitland NSW 2320
POSTAL ADDRESS: PO Box 327 Maitland NSW 2320
EMAIL: admin@maitlandsj.catholic.edu.au
TELEPHONE NUMBER: 02 4933 5613

SCHOOL TIMES:

School begins 9.00am
Recess 11.00am
Lunch 1:00pm
School finishes 3.00pm
Front Office hours: Monday to Friday 8am – 4pm

COMMUNITY AT ST JOHN THE BAPTIST

PARISH PRIEST: Father George Anthicad
PRINCIPAL: Mrs Kate Ferguson
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL: Mrs Stacey Whiting

TERM DATES FOR 2026 FOR STUDENTS

Please note that these dates are subject to change. COMPASS will have up to date information for all families as well at the Diocesan Catholic Schools Website.

Student Free Days will be publicised through COMPASS and Term overviews.

Term 1

Tuesday 27 January - Thursday 2 April 2026

Term 2:

Monday 20 April - Friday 3 July 2026

Term 3:

Monday 20 July - Friday 25 September 2026

Term 4:

Monday 12 October - Thursday 17 December 2026

THE HISTORY OF OUR SCHOOL

In 1834, Maitland was the only Catholic school in the area, having opened in 1833 by Peter Cook. "... his school in Maitland was conducted in a small cottage in Hunter Street."³ Our first Catholic teacher in the Diocese was an ex-convict sentenced to seven years transportation to the Colony of NSW from the Gloucester Assizes.

Arriving in 1818 aboard the convict ship Tottenham, Peter Cook was first assigned to Windsor as an apothecary assistant then as school master in Richmond, arriving in Maitland in 1833 to open and teach in our

first Catholic school before moving to the Wilberforce area to open another Catholic school.



By 1856, Catholic schooling had established a permanent footing for boys and girls at St John the Baptist, Victoria Street, West Maitland due to the vision of the Very Reverend Fr Dean Lynch. Dean Lynch bought land in Victoria Street and, on April 7, 1856, the foundation stone was laid. A document buried under it records "the proposed building will be a handsome brick structure in Victoria Street with a stone portico in front. It will be two-storied, the length of it being 50 feet by 20 feet in breadth, and a height of 23 feet". The school room for the boys was on the lower floor and the girls' room was on the upper level.

The school was named St John the Baptist School and instruction was by lay teachers until the arrival of Sisters of the Good Samaritan in 1864. They withdrew from the school three years later and, in the brief interval before the Dominican Sisters arrived to take charge on September 16 1867, the school was staffed by 'Misses Healy'.

In 1866 the N.S.W. Colonial Government had proclaimed a Public School Act and issued a certificate to St. John's School accrediting it as a "Denominational School" under the Act. In 1874 St. John's Primary School was built facing Cathedral Street. Bishop Murray wrote on September 14, 1882, that two Patrician Brothers had already taken charge of St. John's Boys' School. They left Maitland in 1888. The Headmaster for nine years to 1898 was a Mr H. A. O'Connor, who was succeeded by the Marist Brothers. About



1910 a large addition was made to St. John's School in Victoria Street. A room downstairs was used as a Kindergarten and the upper-storey was divided into two rooms.



The playing area was expanded in 1946 when an adjoining site was bought from the C.B.C. Bank. An Army Hut was installed as a School Hall.

The school was further renovated in 1952 and again three years later after the 1955 flood and in preparation for the School's Centenary the following year. The renovations included an external staircase and the occupation of an adjacent building. This building, now demolished, originally contained two homes separated at ground level by an arch over a carriageway.

One section was for a time used as St. Mary's Commercial School and the other remained a residence. In 1956 the commercial classes were moved, and St. John's pupils moved in.

This building was demolished after it was bought by the Parish in the 1960's. Its site provided additional playing area and the two-storey brick building which now houses Kindergarten and the two upper-level classrooms was constructed.

The acquisition of demountable classrooms completed the additions necessary to accommodate the nine classes that were at the school at the time.

BUILDING THE EDUCATION REVOLUTION (BER)

Under the Federal Governments Stimulus Package, St John's was granted approximately \$4 million to upgrade facilities. 2010 became a year of planning, great upheaval and great growth! The school operated "on site" whilst the new buildings were being constructed. The BER project included:-

The construction of new classrooms, multipurpose hall, administration, library/computer suite, canteen, drive-through/drop off/pick up, toilets demolition of the current library, administration block, toilet block. The removal of all demountable buildings, the demolition of the current library and the playground landscaping will be the last feature of the project.



THE CATHOLIC DIMENSION OF OUR SCHOOL

Catholic Education is an integral part of the Church's mission and is grounded in the Scriptures, in the teachings and great traditions of faith and prayer. St John the Baptist School is committed to creating an environment which is characterised by acceptance, security, justice and happiness.

We are committed to the pursuit of excellence in all areas and the development of an Australian spirituality, which reflects our Catholic story and multicultural heritage.

As Religious Educators at St John the Baptist, our role is to provide the teaching and learning experiences so that the children may grow in their faith, in their personal relationship with God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit, as they learn more about Jesus. As the children move through Primary School their capacity to understand concepts and the teachings of Jesus grows and develops. The children will be led to express their love of God in their own way; celebrating the joy of belonging to the family of the Church.

We endeavour to provide for our students an education which develops their talents and capacities to their full potential. Students are encouraged to achieve high standards of learning and to develop self-confidence and high self-esteem.

We believe that St John the Baptist is the building block for further education and, therefore, we need to provide a respect for learning and positive attitudes for a life-long education. We need to assist our students to become transforming influences in society and we believe that young Australians should be offered the highest possible quality education.



PARENTS, THE PRIME EDUCATORS

The family, more than the church or the school, exerts the deepest influence on the faith development of young children. With this in mind, St John the Baptist seeks to actively support, not replace parents and families in the Christian formation of their children.

Parental attitude and example have a primary influence on the development of their children's lifelong values and practices. Catholic education is a partnership between home, school and parish. The goal is for all in the partnership to take responsibility for the faith development of the children within their care.

SACRAMENTAL AND LITURGICAL LIFE

Throughout the year the children will be given opportunities to participate in the Eucharist, through school Masses, class Masses and liturgies, which form a part of our school life. Families are invited to join us in these celebrations and all dates can be found in the Compass Calendar.

In accordance with the Maitland-Newcastle Diocesan Policy on The Sacraments of Initiation, specific sacramental preparation program will be offered to you by the Sacramental Team from the Chisholm Region. The school provides support to the regional-based programme by implementing teaching programmes on the sacraments at the time of preparation. To contact the parish please call: 4933 8918

PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral care is the total care of students and all others in our school community. The responsibility of care is entrusted to all members of the school community. The family is recognised as the true context of the educational focus. Quality relationships and mutual care are central to effective pastoral care and should enable all to grow and to be affirmed in their dignity and worth as persons.

Through Pastoral Care at St John the Baptist we hope to:

- Ensure that Pastoral Care is integral and permeates the total environment and culture of the school;
- Create a caring network between families, school and the wider community in which we live;
- Develop skills in building personal relationships based on Gospel values of love, compassion, tolerance, acceptance, forgiveness, reconciliation and justice;
- Develop structures, policies and practices which support the individual student and all members of the school community;
- Be aware of pressures and concerns affecting students, teachers and families within the school community.



ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL

Under the Education Act, children must not be kept home for reasons other than illness or exceptional circumstances. Regular school attendance is essential for your child's success—attending every day makes learning easier and helps children build and maintain friendships. It is a condition of enrolment that your child attends school each day.

If your child is absent, parents must notify the school via the COMPASS app. If an absence is not explained, parents will be contacted through our SMS absence service. Students arriving after the bell must be signed in by a parent or guardian at the front office. Please note that it is the parent's responsibility to come into the school to sign their child in or out.

The Principal has the right to question requests for absences and determine whether the reason provided is justified. Principals may request medical certificates or other documentation for long or frequent absences explained as illness. If the explanation is not considered satisfactory, the absence will be recorded as unjustified.

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged not to withdraw children from school for family holidays. If your child will be away for more than ten school days, you must contact the school to request an Application for Extended Leave Form. This form must be completed by the parent and approved by the Principal before a Certificate of Extended Leave is issued. For absences of fewer than ten days, please notify the school using the COMPASS app

Further information regarding school attendance can be obtained from:
<https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/school-attendance-information>



1 day a fortnight
(M T W T F)
(M T W T F) = 4 weeks per year
= Over 1 year missed over their school life

BOOK CLUB

Scholastic operates within our school. Order forms are sent home at regular intervals. This club provides opportunities to buy books which are reasonably priced and suitable to the age and interest of the children in each grade.

BUS TRAVEL

All eligible students must obtain a School Opal Card to be able to catch a bus to and from school. Applications for each year open the year prior. Once your child's enrolment has been confirmed, you are able to complete the application at <https://transportnsw.info/school-travel-apply>

Finding the Right Bus

To find the correct school bus for your child go to www.cdcbus.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/St-John-The-Baptist-Primary-School.pdf
Search Schools A – Z and find St John the Baptist Primary School and select.

CHILDREN'S PROPERTY:

All property, especially clothing, should be clearly marked with your child's name. The school cannot accept responsibility for items that are lost or damaged. To avoid issues, toys should not be brought to school for play.

If any item of property is lost at school and does not have a name on it, it will be placed in the Lost and Found basket in the office. At the end of each term, any item not claimed will be donated.

What can families expect from our school?

At St John the Baptist, we encourage parents and carers to be involved in their child’s schooling. Evidence shows that positive communication between parents, carers and educators improves children’s academic achievement and overall wellbeing.

Our aim is to provide families with various opportunities to engage in their child’s school life in a way that is meaningful to them.

Below is a table that identifies various ways we promote family engagement in our school community and the information you can expect to receive from us throughout the school year.

Compass

In the table below, you will notice that ‘Compass’ is referred to several times. Compass is a comprehensive information system used by our school that enables staff to effectively manage all information relating to students and their school journey.

When parents and carers enrol their child in our school, they receive a letter that includes a unique Compass code that enables them to receive information that is personalised for their child. Parents and carers can access Compass via a web browser or, via an app on their tablet or smart phone. All parents and carers are encouraged to download the Compass Parent App, as it is schools’ primary source of information distribution.

Using Compass, parents and carers can:

- Monitor their child/ children’s attendance, and enter in explanations for absences
- View ‘My News’, a news feed of school announcements, newsletters, alerts and updates
- View their child’s schedule and the school calendar
- Download and view their child’s school report (for each year they are enrolled in the school)
- Schedule parent teacher interview bookings and upcoming events.

To learn more about the Compass app and how to use it, please visit [Compass For Parents](#) | [Compass Education AU](#)



Overview of educator-led, personalised communications and engagement with families		
WHAT	FREQUENCY	OVERVIEW
SCHOOL REPORTS	Twice per year, towards the end of Term 2 and Term 4.	We provide information to parents and carers on their child’s achievement and progress through formal reports, which are accessible through Compass.
PARENT-TEACHER MEETINGS	At the commencement of Term 1	A parent-teacher provides parents and carers with an opportunity to discuss their child’s development at school with their teacher(s). Whilst referred to as ‘meeting’ they are typically quite informal chats and aim to aid parents, carers and educators in developing a collaborative relationship for the benefit of the child, by sharing insights and ideas about the students’ learning style and social development. More information about our parent-teacher interviews will be provided to parents and carers in the weeks leading up to the scheduled meetings, including how to book a meeting and flexible meeting options.
STUDENT LED CONFERENCES	At the commencement of Term 3	A student-led conference is, as the name suggests, typically led by the student with the support of their teacher. Each student is invited to prepare for the meeting and articulate their learning successes and future goals. Parents and carers play an important role in the meeting by listening to their children articulate their goals, showing an interest in what they are learning and, offering support for them to achieve their goals. Importantly, this style of discussion promotes student voice and provides parents and carers with an opportunity to hear what learning expectations are in place for students and, to see how their child is progressing towards meeting those expectations. More information about our student led conferences will be provided to parents and carers in the weeks leading up to the scheduled meetings, including how to book a meeting and flexible meeting options.

Overview of educator-led, class communications and engagement with families		
WHAT	FREQUENCY	OVERVIEW
COMPASS UPDATES	As needed	Compass is our main place for information for parents and carers. Compass is used to communicate regular school updates, the school calendar and book into parent teacher interviews. Compass is available as an app as well as a desktop application. If you are experiencing any difficulty access your individual login, please contact the front office.
SEESAW (K - 3)	Regular updates to commence in Term 2	We know many families appreciate receiving regular updates around what their child is learning in class. As such, educators of students in Kindergarten, Year 1, 2 and 3 will use See Saw to share photos, videos and written accounts on what activities have occurred for your child’s learning and how this contributes to their learning and development. Please note that See Saw is no longer available to direct message the teacher.
BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD) (YR 4 - 6)	Regular updates from Term 1	Educators of students in Year 4, 5 and 6 will use applications on students laptops to complete work. We strongly encourage families to talk with their student and ask to see their learning that is being completed on their BYOD. These documents demonstrate what activities have occurred.
TERM OVERVIEWS	Once per term, at the beginning of the term.	At the beginning of each term, class teachers will provide parents and carers with a brief overview of what will be taught in each learning area over the term.

Overview of school-led, class communications and engagement with families		
WHAT	FREQUENCY	OVERVIEW
SCHOOL NEWSLETTERS	Fortnightly	Our school newsletter is distributed online, via Compass. It is important that you take the time to read this newsletter as it is our primary source of communication with parents and carers. Each edition provides parents and carers with important and timely information about our school community including student learning, upcoming events, staff updates and other operational matters.

FACEBOOK POSTS ON SCHOOL FACEBOOK PAGE	Weekly updates	Our school has a Facebook page, which is regularly updated with photos and videos which celebrate our students' achievements and community events. From time to time, we may provide reminders to parents and carers on our Facebook page. However, we kindly ask that you do not rely on Facebook posts as a source of timely information but instead refer to Compass updates and school newsletters.
SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES	Weekly, Fridays at 8:55am	Recognise and celebrate merit awards of identified classes (blue classes one week followed by white classes on the other). All parents are welcome to attend these assemblies.
SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS	Please see the Compass calendar for dates of these events	Throughout the year, families will be invited to attend various events including liturgies, sports carnivals, assemblies and celebrations. We know life is busy, so we will always aim to provide you with as much notice as possible so that if practical, you can plan to attend. Information about upcoming events is included in our school newsletter, but you can also access the school calendar on Compass, which is regularly updated.
Information events		Throughout the year, we will host events for parents and carers, designed to inform you about an aspect of your child's school life. These events will be promoted to parents and carers in the school newsletter and may be designed for parents and carers of children in specific cohorts, or for parents and carers of children in any year level.
Showcases	Semester 2	Showcases allows students an opportunity to 'showcase' their learning for their families. These showcases are based on student need and will be different for each class.
Open classrooms	Once a term, please see COMPASS for identified dates	As a school community we invite parents to use our 'Open Classroom' sessions to visit their students classroom and see their students learning. These dates maybe for the whole school or for individual classrooms and will be advertised through Compass.

* Private Facebook/ social media groups

We are aware that some members of our school community administrate and/or are members of private groups on social media pages. Please be aware that these pages are not established or endorsed by our school and that the information contained in these pages is not authorised or monitored by our staff. We appreciate that these groups have likely been established to assist families to communicate with each other about school-related matters and in support of forming social connections. We kindly remind parents and carers that in enrolling your child in our school you have signed a Code of Conduct and ask that you act in accordance with this code when communicating on any public or private social media pages.

Lines of Communication

We welcome hearing from families, too!

At St John the Baptist, we want all members of our school community to feel welcome, valued and heard. Developing and maintaining positive relationships within our school community is an essential part of our school culture. Accordingly, we take great care to communicate with families regularly about our school community and engage them in their child's school life.

As valued members of our school community, we invite parents and carers to reach out to our staff too. We encourage you to say 'hello' and introduce yourself to our staff, whenever you visit our school, and we hope that you can join us for the many and varied events that we host throughout the year.

We also acknowledge that sometimes you may want to raise matters that are more complex or serious in nature. Often, these matters are not well-suited for impromptu discussions where there are many people around or, staff may not have ready access to information to support the discussion. As such, we welcome parents and carers contacting staff in a more formalised way, particularly if they have information that they think may assist their child's teacher(s) to support their learning and wellbeing.

We strongly encourage you send your emails to maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au with the class teachers name in the subject. Please be aware that when contacting a staff member that an expected response will occur within 3 business days acknowledging your email.

To assist in ensuring families' communications with our school are responded to in the most effective and timely manner, we have compiled a table on the most preferred actions for parents and carers to take when contacting the school. The table also includes a guide for anticipated response times.

Contacting school administration

Our school office administration hours are: 8:00am to 3:30pm

Email: maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au

Phone: (02) 4933 5613

You are welcome to make contact with administration staff in person, over the phone or via email. Please note, by contacting our school administration office, ***your enquiry will be addressed in a time-sensitive manner by the most appropriate member of staff at that point in time***. This is particularly important for any urgent matters, as the staff in the administration office will be aware of staff absences or other operational matters which may impact your message being received by a specific individual.

The advice contained in the table is general in nature and does not cover every scenario. If you have a question or enquiry that is not covered by the table, you are encouraged to contact the school’s administration office and a staff member will be able to assist direct or respond to your enquiry.

Who should I contact?			
	Call or visit school administration	Email school administration maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au	Email maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au ATTN: Class teacher
Time-sensitive matters (Anticipated response within the same day)			
Changes to school pick-up for that day	*	*	
Request for information regarding school events	*	*	
General information/ enquiries (Anticipated response within three days)			
Changes to home address, contact details etc		*	
Enquiry regarding Compass	*	*	
Enquiry about school policy or procedure		*	
School fee exemption application		*	
Information relating to school excursions	*	*	*
Information about travel to and from school	*	*	
School uniform enquiries	*	*	
Student learning and wellbeing (Anticipated response within three days)			
Requesting information about student learning- content and procedures		*	*
Raising concerns regarding student behaviour or wellbeing			*

	Call or visit school administration	Email school administration maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au	Email maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au ATTN: Class teacher
Information regarding medication dispensary		*	*
Request for additional supports		*	*
Changes in family circumstances e.g. death, separation etc		*	*
Request for extended absence		*	
Code of Conduct (Anticipated response within the same day)			
Concerns regarding breaches of Code of Conduct (relating to staff, parents and other community members).		 which will be forwarded to a member of the leadership team	
Concerns regarding Safeguarding (welfare of students)		 which will be forwarded a member of the leadership team	

** Some matters have more than one contact method selected, in these instances parents and carers may choose the most appropriate point of contact for their individual circumstance.

Lines of Communication

Complex and ongoing enquiries - who should families turn to?

As a Catholic school, our staff are committed to caring for students in a holistic manner and aim to provide them with support and empowerment to live their life to the full. We also acknowledge that from time to time, students may experience challenges in our school community or, with their learning and wellbeing. We find that most matters at St John the Baptist, Maitland can be resolved very quickly and effectively if directed to the correct staff member.

If parents and carers have any questions, concerns or information regarding their child's learning and wellbeing, they are encouraged to contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. If, after liaising with their child's teacher, parents and carers still have questions or reservations our school has a team of staff who can provide assistance to all parties involved.

To support families navigate what action to take when a complex or ongoing issue arises, a flow chart has been developed. Parents, carers and students are encouraged to refer to this chart, if they would like to raise a matter relating to teaching, learning and wellbeing practices at our school.

First - Classroom teacher

Issues relating to specific subjects, learning and teaching, social or wellbeing concerns which include assignments & examinations, homework, resources and equipment are directed to the subject teacher/ classroom teacher in the first instance.



Next - Learning Stage Leadership Member

If the issue is unable to be resolved with the teacher, contact the front office who will pass on your email.



Then - Assistant Principal

If the matter remains unresolved, you are invited to contact the Assistant Principal, who works to support both students and staff on all matters relating to student learning and wellbeing.



Finally - Principal

Appointments can be made through the school's administration team on maj-admin@mn.catholic.edu.au

Complaints Resolution

The Catholic Schools Office (CSO) and St John the Baptist are committed to providing a positive, safe environment for all staff and students. There are occasions, however, when members of our school and wider community are concerned about something happening at a school that appears to be unsatisfactory or unreasonable.

The CSO has formal written protocols in place to address complaints and grievances. These protocols are in line with the Diocesan Complaints Resolution Policy, developed to provide a consistent approach for all diocesan schools. This policy aims to address the concerns of parents and carers and the wider community. These concerns may include children's learning, behaviour and welfare, school organisation and management, student health and safety issues. Complaints made to the school are also registered through the diocese.

[To lodge a complaint with the Catholic Schools Office please click here.](#)

[You can access the Catholic Schools Office Complaints and Resolutions Policy and resources here.](#)

CONTACT NUMBERS AND EMAILS

Please ensure that the school has your current address, work/home/mobile telephone numbers, emails and emergency contact numbers. It is vital that we have up-to-date phone contact numbers so that we may contact you at home or at work in the event that your child may be suffering from an illness or injury.

CANTEEN



The school canteen is open for morning tea & lunch on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. It is staffed by school families and is a voluntary service. A price list of items is available on the QKR app. To order lunch please download the Qkr app

- search for St John the Baptist Primary School, Maitland,
- add your child's name and class
- Tap menu and a list of available menus will appear.

Orders close at 9am each day.

CHANGE IN ROUTINE

Any change in routine e.g. going to another child's house after school, must be mentioned either in writing to the class teacher or via email to admin@maitlandsj.catholic.edu.au Please ensure that this is communicated before 2:30 to allow time for the message to get to your child.

CURRICULUM

At St John the Baptist School the curriculum encompasses seven key learning area including:
Religious Education - prescribed by Maitland Newcastle Diocese

English

Mathematics

Science

Technological and Applied Sciences

Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE)

Creative Arts (Music, Dance Drama and Visual Arts)

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

The above 7 subjects are prescribed by the New South Wales Education Standards Authority and taught within all classrooms. Once a week, classes participate in specialist lessons which include Library & Creative Arts.

Each term, class teachers will send out a curriculum overview, identifying key learning topics throughout the term as well as any changes to routine within the school term.



DISMISSAL PROCEDURE IN THE AFTERNOON

Each afternoon the children line up according to the mode of transport being used for their journey home. Each line is supervised by a teacher until the children are safely on buses or on our drive through. Parents are requested to respect the rule of 'no play' after school and quickly escort your child out of the school grounds after you have collected them. All teaching staff are required for duty after school and are not able to informally meet with parents during this time.

DRIVE THROUGH:

If you are collecting your student through drive through, please ensure that your surname is displayed on your visor. This will ensure that staff can call your students name and they are ready for you. Please do not arrive early to school and sit in the drive through line as this blocks the car park and also stops others from accessing our school. No student is to walk through the drive through line or car park before or after school.

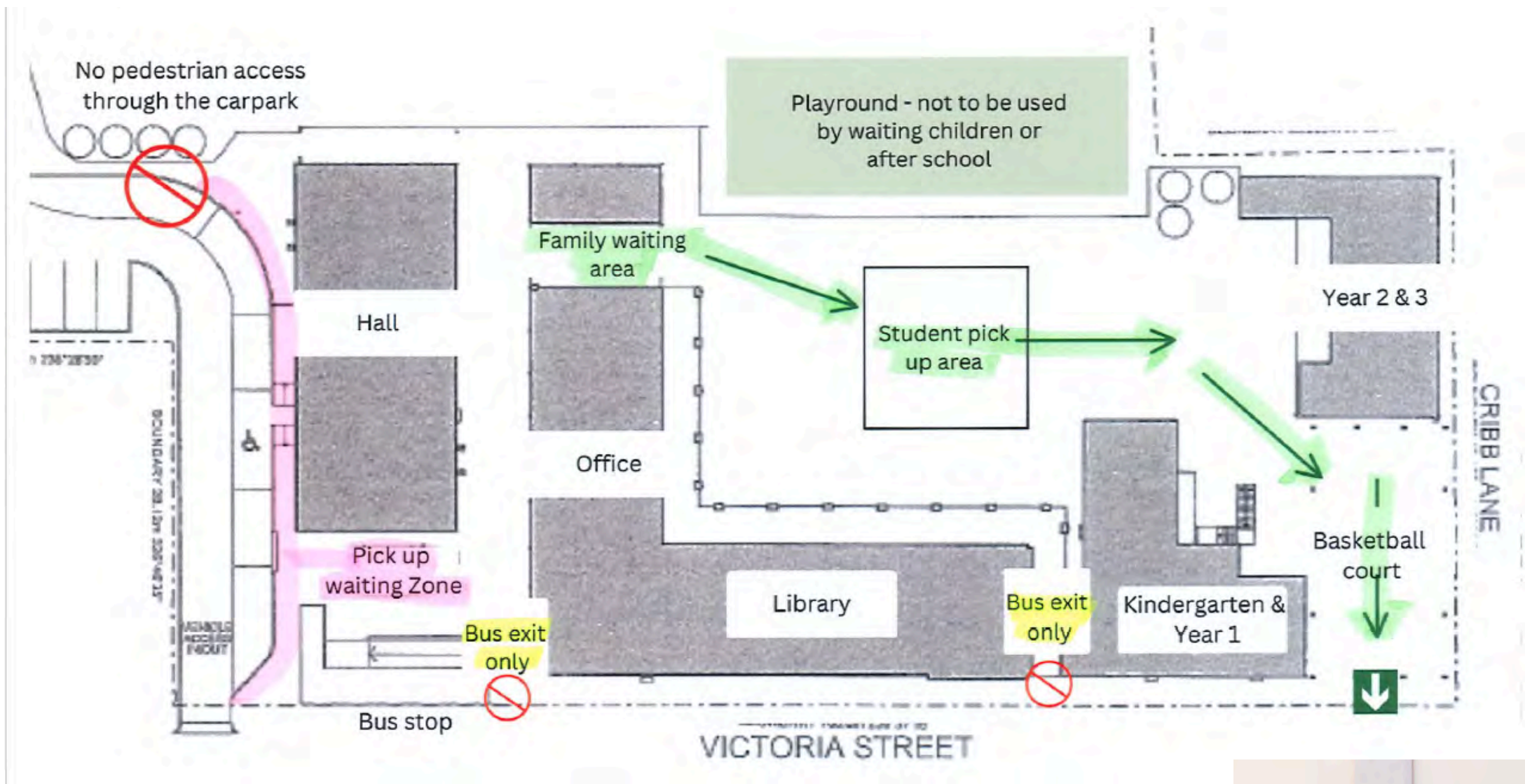
IN PERSON PICK UP

The school gate on Victoria St (near the Basketball Court) will be accessible for parents to collect their student from approx. 2:55pm. If you arrive at school before this time, parents and family members are invited to wait for their children outside the office area and within the tunnel from 2:50pm, coming into the school grounds using the front entrance gate at Victoria St outside the office.

No parents or family members are to wait outside classrooms or interrupt the learning occurring in classrooms, shared concrete area or on the oval. Parents exiting from school grounds are to use the Victoria St exit accessed by walking through the Basketball court so as to not interfere with traffic or students in bus lines.

BUSES

Students line up in the bus line each afternoon. If your student is new to catching the bus, please let staff know and we will assist them in making sure that they get to the right line.



DROP OFF PROCEDURE OF A MORNING

Students are supervised by staff from 8:30 in the morning. Students are to seat in the concrete area outside the hall if they arrive at school before this time.



DROP OFF THROUGH DRIVE THROUGH

Students are able to be dropped at school through ‘drive through’. To ensure traffic is not stopped, drivers are to stay in the car at all times. If your student is unable to get out of the car without adult assistance, it is advised that you park and walk your student in.

EARLY DEPARTURE OR LATE ARRIVAL

Children who arrive after 9:00am are to be signed in electronically through the front office by their parent/guardians. Any students leaving early must be signed out electronically through the front office by their parent/guardians. Students are not permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours on their own accord. Student/s will only be released to those listed in our system or an authorised person when the school has been informed of this request. When necessary, the Principal will determine the validity of the claim made by a person requesting the release of a student.

EXCURSIONS

School excursions enhance children’s development and are directly related to the curriculum. Parents are given as much notice as possible of pending excursions. Parental consent is required for children to attend school excursions. Payment of all classroom excursion is through the resource fee paid by each student.

FAMILY COURT ORDERS

If there are any conditions concerning the custody of a child, the Principal must be informed of these, in writing, so as to ensure the safety of the child. Copies of any court orders concerning access to students by non-custodial parents must be given to the school.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Technology is an integral part of learning at our school. Every classroom is equipped with interactive tools, including laptops, tablets, and smart boards, supported by full wireless connectivity. Students in Years 4–6 participate in a 1:1 iPad BYOD program, while younger students use school-provided devices—iPads in Kindergarten and Year 1, and a mix of iPads and laptops in Years 2 and 3. Interactive whiteboards and data projectors are standard in all learning spaces.

Our Teacher Librarian and Pedagogical Mentors work alongside classroom teachers to embed technology meaningfully into learning, ensuring students develop the skills they need for a connected world.



INJURIES AND ILLNESSES AT SCHOOL

Throughout the day, students may feel unwell or hurt themselves, sometimes resulting in attending the First Aid room. If the injury or illness is deemed to affect the student to the point of interfering with their attendance at school, parents will be contacted. In the case of an emergency, if parents are uncontactable, emergency contacts will be called.

Should your child become ill while at school and it is considered advisable that he/she be sent home this will be done. We will contact you by phone to arrange for your child to be collected from school.

Should students require occasional medication while at school (e.g. antibiotics) this should be left with the school secretary. A school permission form must be filled out which is available through the front office. No child will be given medication unless written instructions are received from the parent/guardian.

MEDICATION -

It is diocesan policy, and therefore policy of this school that any medication to be given to students is done so only on the written advice of a medical practitioner. Preferably, students should take prescribed medications at home. Office staff cannot accept responsibility for administering medications on time. If necessary, medications should be administered at morning tea or lunch breaks. If it is necessary for a child to take medicine during school hours, the following guidelines will apply.

Short Term Medication

If it is necessary for a child to take medicine during school hours on a medical practitioner's advice for a period of time, parents are required to complete a Student Medication Request Form and bring to the school office, together with the container displaying the practitioner's instructions. These instructions must include the pharmacist's label, showing:

- The name of the drug
- The 'use by date'
- The name of the student's medical practitioner
- The name of the student
- The dosage and frequency of administration

Such medications are to be kept in sick bay, not in the child's bag or desk

Long Term Medication

(Longer than 2 days or administered 'as required')

Medication which is to be taken daily or regularly over a period of time, or medication which is to be administered 'as required' (such as asthma medication or over the counter drugs such as headache tablets) requires a Student Medication Request Form to be completed by the parent or the child's medical practitioner before administration of medication at school can begin. All such medications must be brought to school in the container displaying the pharmacist's label as outlined above.



LIBRARY

Our Library is the heart of learning at St John the Baptist, designed to make discovery exciting and interactive. It sparks curiosity and supports every learner through a blend of print resources, digital tools, and technology that meets the needs of all students.

With a fully automated catalogue and easy access for borrowing and research, students can visit in class groups, small groups, or individually. Weekly borrowing is available for all students—just remember a library bag!

The Library is more than books—it's a space where creativity meets technology, offering dynamic ways to learn and explore.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR FOR LEARNING

Our community of Maitland Newcastle Catholic Schools value an inclusive approach to student support to enable students to successfully complete their studies. We are entrusted to nurture and support students in a safe and welcoming environment that is grounded in our Catholic faith in which stewardship and advocacy are key values.

As Catholic educators, we hold fundamental beliefs that are foundational to our work with students, parents and colleagues. As such we value:

our Catholic Christian tradition;
dignity and justice for all;
Catholic Christian community;
high quality learning;
collaboration and subsidiarity (shared wisdom);
creativity;
stewardship;
and a mutual accountability.

In Catholic schools the goal of formation in right behaviour and respectful relationships which occur in a supportive community where students are provided with models of Christ-centred living and where they can learn from their mistakes; build and restore relationships in a climate of safety, acceptance, and reconciliation. Further information can be found on our school website.



St John the Baptist

Positive Behaviour for Learning



Service

Be Respectful



Wear the correct uniform with pride.

Use safe hands and safe feet.

Care for the environment.

Make good choices at all times.

Community

Be Responsible



Care for belongings and equipment.

Accept responsibility for your actions.

Move safely at all times.

Be in the right place at the right time.

Study

Be a learner



Try your best and participate.

Listen and follow instructions.

Be organised and prepared for learning.

Communicate, collaborate and co-operate with others.

Prayer

Be like Jesus



Be inclusive of others.

Use kind words and actions.

Help others when needed.

Be reverent during special times.

REPORTING AND ASSESSMENT

WRITTEN REPORTS

At the end of each semester, parents and caregivers receive a formal written report that provides a clear picture of student learning—how your child is progressing, the quality of their achievement, and what comes next.

Reporting is based on teachers' professional judgment, drawn from a range of assessments and student work, and measured against the achievement standards of the NSW Curriculum. At St John the Baptist, we use multiple tools and evidence to ensure reporting is accurate, meaningful, and focused on growth.

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS & STUDENT LED CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher interviews are a valuable opportunity to strengthen partnerships between families and the school. Our mid-year interviews take the form of student-led conferences, where students, parents, and teachers collaborate to reflect on progress. These conferences allow students to celebrate their achievements and set future goals.

Parents will be asked to book these formal interviews through COMPASS, and further details will be provided closer to the date

SAFEGUARDING IN DIOCESAN SCHOOLS

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and St John the Baptist Maitland are committed to the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of every child. In 2019, Bishop Bill Wright set this expectation for all who work within the Diocese:

"I expect you to place the safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child and vulnerable adult at the centre of everything you do in the name of our Church."

To support this, the Office of Safeguarding was established. Reporting directly to the Bishop, this office oversees child safeguarding across the Diocese, including our schools. As a parent, you play an important role in safeguarding your child. The Office of Safeguarding website provides comprehensive information about our approach, and we encourage you to be actively involved in school life.

If you have concerns about:

- The safety, welfare, or wellbeing of a child
- The conduct of a staff member, volunteer, contractor, or other adult

You can:

- Speak with a Teacher, Assistant Principal, or Principal
- Contact the Office of Safeguarding intake worker (Ph: 4979 1390 during office hours)
- Report to the Department of Communities and Justice Child Protection Helpline (Ph: 132 111, 24/7) if there is a risk of significant harm
- Contact NSW Police if you believe a crime has been committed

VOLUNTEERS – SAFEGUARDING

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle and St John the Baptist has an absolute and abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children. As a volunteer working in a diocesan school, you should be aware of your obligations and responsibilities in protecting students from abuse or neglect.

Volunteers enrich students school experiences. To become a volunteer please visit www.mn.catholic.org.au/people/volunteer/. On this website you will find the diocesan volunteer policy, code of conduct and the commitment to safeguarding.

Opportunities to volunteer at St John the Baptist include, but are definitely not limited to:

- Tuckshop
- Sports Carnival such as athletics, swimming and cross country
- Preparing for community events
- Mothers and Fathers Day events such as stalls or afternoon / morning teas
- Uniform shop
- Gardening and landscaping
- Incursions or enhancing learning in the classrooms

If you have any suggestions about how you could volunteer at school, we would love to talk with you!

SPORT

Children in the Infants' section join weekly PE & sports lesson as well as different activities at the school Athletics carnival. Children in the Primary section have the opportunity to compete in school, regional, diocesan, inter-diocesan and state swimming, cross country and athletics carnivals each year.

Sports uniform is worn on an allocated day which parents will be informed by the class teacher at the start of the year. Sports Day is held on different days for each class.

For the purpose of competition on carnival days and for other school activities, children are placed in one of the following house teams:

COGHLAN

FINNEGAN

DOWLEY

FAGAN

All the children in one family are placed in the same colour team and as far as practicable, will remain in that team for the whole of their schooling at St John the Baptist School.



STUDENT LEARNING AND WELLBEING TEAM

Our Student Support Team works collaboratively to help students thrive—academically, socially, and emotionally. The team includes Learning Support Teachers, the Guidance Counsellor, Pastoral Care Worker, Learning Support Assistants, and Enhancement Teachers, alongside specialists in EAL/D, Aboriginal Education, and Gifted Education.

We meet regularly to develop tailored plans for students who need extra support. Sometimes concerns can be resolved quickly; other times, ongoing strategies are put in place. When needed, we connect families with external services such as speech or language therapists.

By combining expertise and creativity, the team ensures every child has the right support to succeed and feel confident in their learning journey.

LEARNING SUPPORT TEACHER (LST)

The LST supports the school and teachers to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities. They use the principles of inclusive education to provide flexibility to respond to the diverse needs of students within Maitland Newcastle Catholic Schools communities. The LST has key partnerships with multiple stakeholders - students, parents and caregivers, school leadership, classroom teachers, guidance counsellors, learning leaders, education officers and visiting teachers.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST

The school Guidance Counsellor works collaboratively within the school community to promote and foster the achievement, participation, development, mental health and wellbeing of all students. They provide support to students dealing with situations or difficulties that negatively impact upon their wellbeing or opportunities to learn such as changing family circumstances, social, emotional or behavioural difficulties, as well as academic concerns.

PASTORAL CARE WORKER



Our Pastoral Care Worker is a trained, experienced and compassionate person who provides support to students, their families and staff. They are positive role models who bring genuine compassion, understanding and practical ongoing support to students. They achieve this by providing a safe space for others to talk about their experiences, share concerns, and provide emotional support as required. Pastoral Care Workers work alongside and complement other staff, such as teachers, LST and Guidance Counsellors to further assist students and families.

SCHOOL FEES

To meet the costs of running our school, each family contributes through school fees, ensuring expenses are shared fairly. Fees are set annually in November in consultation with the Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office.

School fees cover essential costs such as teaching and learning resources, utilities, insurance, and administration. The Compulsory Building Levy supports loan repayments and maintenance of school facilities and is payable by all families.

Accounts are emailed at the start of each term. If you do not receive your account, please contact the front office. Families are asked to plan payments by the due date, with options for weekly or monthly instalments. If unforeseen circumstances arise, please arrange a meeting with the Principal as soon as possible.

Where families are genuinely unable to meet the full fee commitment, concessions can be discussed with the Principal. If fees remain unpaid and no contact is made, the School Fee Collection Policy—aligned with Maitland-Newcastle guidelines—will apply. As a final step, unpaid fees may be referred to a collection agency.

Family Model for Diocesan Tuition Fees

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle is very conscious of the financial challenges facing parents and have implemented an approach to ease the burden for families with more than one child in diocesan schools. Broadly, the change was to apply the discount to each school child in the family, whether they attended the same diocesan school or not. For example, a family with one secondary and two primary school children in diocesan schools now receives a 20% discount on the secondary school fees and on the primary school fees of both the younger children. The discount rates are set out below.

Diocesan Tuition Fees 2025

At the time of writing this handbook, the Diocesan Tuition Fees and Diocesan Family & School Building Levy for 2026 were not available. A separate Information Sheet will be added to the booklet, sent home in hard copy and put in our School Newsletter as soon as they become available.

For your information, the 2025 Tuition Fees were \$1,761.00

In 2025, the Family Discount on Diocesan Tuition Fees was:

1 child family 0% - full rate applies

2 child family 15% off each child's tuition fees

3 child family 25% off each child's tuition fees

4 child family 50% off each child's tuition fees

The Diocesan Family & School Building Levy (DF&SBL)

The DF&SBL is a diocesan levy, charged on the oldest child in each family. The DF&SBL assists in financing capital works in existing schools and the establishment of new schools. Historically and for a considerable period, our schools were built and maintained by the voluntary contributions of the people of the Diocese through their parishes. Part of the DF&SBL, therefore, now helps support the Diocese in its pastoral ministries, including various Pastoral Work including the Refugee and Aboriginal ministries, the Hospital Apostolate, and Seasons for Growth, the change, loss and grief program.

UNIFORM

We encourage the children to take pride in their appearance and to dress in the correct uniform at all times. Here are a few practical ways you can help your children.

- Ensure that their uniform is always neat, clean and tidy;
- School shoes are to be polished;
- All clothing needs to be clearly labelled
- School hat to be worn at all times and are compulsory

A note explaining any variation in the school uniform is necessary and expected.



GROOMING & ACCESSORIES

ACCESSORIES

The rule of one applies.

Students may wear:

- one small stud or one sleeper in each ear lobe (silver or gold)
- one signet ring
- one plain gold or silver 'golf' bangle
- one watch (no smart watches)

GROOMING

- Hair is to be the child's natural colour, worn off the face and tied back if it is long (in a style that allows the wearing of the school hat)
- Hair accessories must be in the school colours of navy or white in summer and navy or maroon in winter. Hairbands, scrunchies and ribbons must be plain or made out of school uniform fabric
- Haircuts shall not be extreme including no lines or shaved in symbols and of the child's natural colour
- make-up, nail polish and tattoos are not allowed

Students wear their sports uniform on their allocated day, which will be advised by the class teacher at the start of the year. In 2026, a new sports shirt will be introduced, but the current white shirt may still be worn until the end of 2027.

UNIFORMS

Available from Ken Lane Menswear High Street at Maitland or Lowes at Maitland.

THE SJB UNIFORM SHOP

The Uniform Shop is coordinated by parent volunteers and operates once a week on Mondays. Purchases can also be arranged anytime by sending a note via the school office or emailing the front office.

The shop offers clean, good-quality pre-loved uniform items at affordable prices. Donations of pre-loved uniforms are always welcome and can be left at the front office.

SCHOOL OFFICE

Available for sale at the school office are:

- School Hats

- School Bags:

Primary - Kindy to Year 3 (\$55)

Senior - Year 4 to Year 6 (\$55)

The school backpack is optional, however, it is a durable and cost-effective choice compared to many commercial alternatives.



GIRLS UNIFORM

Summer

- a blue/grey check tunic **or** blue peter pan collared blue shirt and dark blue shorts
- White ankle socks,
- black leather school shoes
- Navy / maroon hair ribbons.

Winter

- Maroon/dark navy tartan pinafore **or** navy slacks.
- Sky blue peter pan collared long sleeve shirt
- Navy school jumper. Navy embroidered school tracksuit jacket may be worn.
- Navy stockings with pinafore.
- Neck piece ONLY with slacks – NOT pinafore.
- Black leather school shoes.
- Navy / maroon hair ribbons.

YEAR 5 and 6 GIRLS (Senior)

- Pinafore minus the bib (tartan skirt)
- Tartan neck piece

BOYS UNIFORM

Summer

Blue short sleeve shirt
Grey shorts
Grey ankle socks
Black leather school shoes

Winter

Blue long sleeve shirt
Long grey pants
Grey ankle socks
Black leather school shoes
Navy school jumper. Navy embroidered
school tracksuit jacket may be worn.
Maroon/black school tartan tie.



SPORTS UNIFORM GIRLS

- White polo shirt with embroidered school logo (until Dec 2027) **OR** Navy Sports Shirt with embroidered school logo (from Jan. 2026)
- Navy skort or navy microfiber short with embroidered logo.
- White ankle socks
- Predominantly white joggers.

Bike shorts or fashion shorts are not acceptable

BOYS

- White polo shirt with embroidered school logo (until Dec 2027) **OR** Navy Sports Shirt with embroidered school logo (from Jan 2026)
- Navy microfiber shorts with embroidered logo.
- White ankle socks
- Predominantly white joggers.

GIRLS AND BOYS WINTER SPORT UNIFORM

- Navy microfiber tracksuit jacket with embroidered school logo
- Matching microfiber tracksuit pants
- White polo shirt with embroidered school logo
- White ankle socks
- Predominantly white joggers.

Navy leggings or tights are NOT acceptable

