



ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

MARGARET RIVER

# Parent Information Handbook 2023

*Inspiring life-long learners who live their faith  
and contribute positively to our world*



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# **1. Goals of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School**

## ***We strive to:***

- Encourage each member of our community to integrate faith, life and culture and to live the values of Christ.
- Unite teachers, students and parents as facilitators of learning.
- Develop the spiritual, cognitive, physical, creative, social and emotional attributes of each student preparing them to take their place in tomorrow's society.
- Promote learning as a life-long process and encourage a love for learning in each child.
- Provide a dynamic and joyful environment that reflects a positive attitude towards growth and change.
- Recognise and appreciate the uniqueness of each member of our community.
- Promote a safe and secure place of learning.
- Achieve excellence in all our endeavours.
- Welcome parents as valued and contributing members of our school community.
- Encourage a love and respect for our environment.
- Prepare students to be worthwhile and contributing members of our society.

## **School Prayer**

Loving God,

Through the faith and example of St Thomas More and St Mary MacKillop,  
help us to love with courage and to never see a need without doing something about it.

Jesus, strengthen us with the Holy Spirit  
to use our hearts compassionately,  
our heads mindfully,  
and our hands to serve others with love.

Amen.

## **School Crest**



The cross reminds us we are centered in Christ, the book symbolizes the learning that takes place at St Thomas More and the vines and grapes reference the Margaret River region.

## **School Vision**

Inspiring life-long learners to live their faith and  
contribute positively to our world.

## **2. Catholic Identity**

The religious dimension at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is very important to us. We reflect Christ's life and teachings throughout the day in a number of ways and aim for it to be an ingrained part of our culture. Ways that we reflect the Catholic Identity at St Thomas More include the celebration of our Feast Day, which is celebrated on the Friday closest to St Thomas More's Feast Day on 22 June; gathering as a school each Friday morning to pray our school prayer or pray decades of the Rosary (in May and October); praying in class each morning, before lunch and before home-time; celebrating important times of the Church calendar, particularly Lent and Advent; celebrating Sacraments as students receive them; attending Mass throughout the terms and celebrating the beginning and end of the year with a Beginning School Year Mass and a Praise and Thanksgiving Mass.

There are many other special celebrations and events that are acknowledged during the school year at St Thomas More. Services are held for both ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day and special feast days such as the Assumption of Mary and All Saints Day are celebrated. Holy Week in Lent and the lead up to Christmas during Advent are also acknowledged and celebrated.

## **3. Parent Involvement Policy**

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School, we try to maintain very close links with parents. Once forged these links have been found to result in:

- Greater understanding by parents of their children's schooling
- Greater understanding by teachers of the children and their needs
- Better communication between home and school
- Fewer misunderstandings
- More goodwill and mutual esteem between parents and teachers
- A happier school

### **3.1 Family Involvement**

This partnership of parents and teachers is vital to the achievement of our vision. The primary role of the Catholic School is to support parents in the formation of each child's faith. Parents are involved in the following ways at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School:

- As community members they elect and largely comprise the School Advisory Council and Parents & Friends Committee, which builds our educational community and supports in the purchase of resources.
- Through communication with class teachers, home and school can complement each other in encouraging development of the whole child.
- Partnering with families to implement a positive Behaviour Management approach.
- Parents play a valuable role in the classroom in extending the children's experiences and by providing additional adult assistance. The active developmental style of learning we provide at St Thomas More needs this parent support in areas such as participation in educational activities, art and craft, physical education, excursions and camps.

### **School Advisory Council**

The School Advisory Council, made up of elected members from the parent and wider community, supports and advises the Principal on school financial matters and offers a parent opinion on decisions which may affect the students within the school, the strategic direction of the school and the future planning of the school. The Advisory Council is not involved in the daily operations of the school.

The School Advisory Council meets once a month and the Chair provides a report to the community at the Annual Community Meeting (ACM), which is traditionally held in November of each year. During the ACM, the School Advisory Council holds their AGM, presenting the following year's budget and school fees. Any new members are also elected at this meeting.

## **Parents and Friends Association**

Parents and guardians are encouraged to be active participants within the Parents & Friends Association which aims to improve the educational facilities for the students, provide a forum between school and home and facilitate social events. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month commencing at 6:00pm and dates for these are published in the newsletter at the beginning of each term. Parents are elected on to the executive at the Annual General Meeting and serve a two-year term before re-election is required.

## **4. Code Of Conduct**

The purpose of a Code of Conduct is to describe the minimum standards of conduct in all behaviour and decision making to ensure the safety and well-being of the students at St Thomas More. All members of our school community must observe and follow the following statements as set out by CEWA:

1. You act safely and competently.
2. You give priority to students' safety and well-being in all your behaviour and decision making.
3. You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.
4. You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.
5. You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.
6. You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.
7. You give impartial, honest and accurate information about the education, safety and well-being of students.
8. You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.
9. You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.
10. You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.
11. You act reflectively and ethically.
12. You allow students to have a voice in their education, safety and well-being.

### **4.1 Parent Charter**

This Parent Charter provides statements which assist parents become more aware of their obligations as a member of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School community and provides advice on appropriate behaviours that should be modelled to others at our school. We recognise that parents are the primary educators and care givers of their children. We appreciate the involvement of parents within our school community and the contribution each parent makes.

## **As integral members of our Catholic School community, parents should:**

### ***Value and respect the Catholic identity of our school with its rituals, traditions, symbols and beliefs.***

- We are a Catholic school.
- Parents who choose to send their children to our school do so with the expectation they will participate in Catholic practices and learn the teachings of our Catholic faith.
- Parents should act as role models by reflecting the values and ethos of our school.

### ***Support children in all educational endeavours both at school and at home.***

- Help children to discover that it is often the process that is experienced rather than the end product that makes it all worthwhile; that giving of your very best is what matters rather than comparing against what others can do.
- Having children at school for the commencement of the day is important to their self-esteem and shows an interest in their learning.

### ***Support St Thomas More Catholic Primary School and the bodies who represent the families of our school.***

- Actively contribute to the life of the school through parent bodies (e.g. supporting the P&F, respecting SAC decisions).
- Parent skills and experience that is volunteered at school permits the students a greater opportunity to participate in learning programs that allow the development of a range of skills and knowledge.
- Have confidence in the professionalism, skills, knowledge and experience of the staff and allow them to effectively do their job.
- Fulfil obligations to pay all fees and levies in a timely manner and seek advice from the Principal should financial difficulties occur.

### ***Contribute to the development of a safe school environment.***

- Work collaboratively with the staff of the school whilst advocating for your children in a positive and respectful way
- Under no circumstances is a parent to approach another child while they are in the care of the school to discuss or chastise them because of their actions towards their own child.
- Inform staff members where intimidation, bullying or harassment occurs, as it is not tolerated.
- Support the Whole School Behaviour Management plan.

### ***Contribute to a welcoming and inclusive community based on the Christian values of respect, love and courtesy.***

- Treat every member of the school community with courtesy and respect. Speak about others as if they were standing there with you.
- Listen, talk collaboratively and share relevant information with teachers and the school staff to understand and resolve any issues, misunderstandings or concerns.
- Approach the classroom teacher should an issue arise with your child. If a resolution is not reached, then it is appropriate to involve the Leadership Team. If parents remain dissatisfied with the result, then a formal complaint can be made or the matter can be referred to the Director, CEWA.
- Value and respect the diversity of different cultures within the school community.
- Confidentiality is of prime concern. Parents and volunteers should not discuss any information they obtain at school with anybody, other than the classroom teacher or school Leadership Team.

### ***Use Social Media appropriately and responsibly.***

- Negative comments regarding the school or any of the pupils/parents/staff members at the school, on social media sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc) should not occur. Any concerns you may have about the school must be made through the appropriate channels by speaking to the class teacher or a member of the Leadership Team, so they can be dealt with fairly, appropriately and effectively for all concerned.

### ***Respect and support school policies and procedures.***

- All policies and procedures are put in place to ensure the safety of the students and allow for optimum learning and best practice to occur.
- Be patient. Teachers are busy teaching your children. They cannot take phone calls or answer emails immediately.

*\*In this Parent Charter, the term 'parent' includes carers and legal guardians*

*\*Should parents choose to consistently or deliberately not follow the guidelines set out in the Code of Conduct, they may be excluded from the school premises.*

## **5. School Organisation**

### **5.1 2023 Term Dates**

<i>Term 1</i>	Wednesday 1 February to Thursday 6 April
<i>Term 2</i>	Wednesday 26 April to Friday 30 June
<i>Term 3</i>	Tuesday 18 July to Friday 22 September
<i>Term 4</i>	Tuesday 10 October to Friday 8 December

*Pupil Free Days for 2023 are organised for Tuesday 7 March, Monday 24 April, Monday 17 July and Monday 9 October. These dates will be confirmed at the beginning of each term.*

*Our Catholic day for 2023 is planned to be on Monday 21 August.*

*A calendar outlining in more detail the activities of the school will be sent out at the beginning of each term and can also be found on our website.*

### **5.2 School Times**

Commence day	8:40am (Pre-Kindy and Kindy commence at 9:00am)
Recess	10:40am - 11:00am
Lunch	12:40pm - 1:20pm
Classes finish	3:00pm

### ***Students***

Parents are asked to have children at school **from 8.20am - 8.40am** when a teacher is on duty. Classroom doors open to give students time to unpack books and get ready for the day at 8.30am. Please **do not** bring students to school before this time as they will not be supervised.

### **5.3 Assemblies**

Assemblies are held each Friday morning commencing at 8:50am. Classes are scheduled for two Performance Assemblies a year – one in each semester. Parents are always welcome to attend school assemblies.



## **5.4 School / Year Group Masses / Liturgies**

Whole School Masses are celebrated throughout the term, with classes scheduled to lead these. Please check the term calendar for these dates.

The Kindergarten to Year 2 classes will celebrate a Liturgy of the Word each term and the Year 3 to Year 6 classes will attend a class Mass each term. Parents are cordially invited to attend these and are most welcome and encouraged to attend any other Liturgical celebrations throughout the year. These are advertised in the Newsletter and are on the Term Calendar.

## **5.5 School Factions**

There are four factions at St Thomas More. All students are placed into one of these Factions on enrolment in the school. The factions are:

**More (Blue)** – Named after St Thomas More

**MacKillop (Red)** – Named after St Mary MacKillop, Australia's first saint

**Sorahan (Gold)** – Named after Reverend Father Sorahan, the first Parish Priest of St Thomas More

**Richardson (Green)** – Named after Sr Imeldine Richardson, one of the first Nuns in the parish of St Thomas More

## **5.6 School Newsletter**

A newsletter is distributed each Thursday by email to each family and is uploaded onto our website. This is the main form of communication of current and future events in the school. Parents should make every effort to read this so they are informed of school events and happenings.

**Notes** are sent periodically by class teachers and administration, primarily electronically. Please respond promptly if an answer is required.

## **5.7 Parent Information Meetings**

These are held early in the year to discuss the year's programme and expectations in each class. It is essential that each family is represented at the meetings. The meeting for 2023 is scheduled for Monday 13<sup>th</sup> February at 5.30pm to 6.15pm and 6.20pm to 7.05pm.

## **5.8 Student Absences / Late Arrivals / Early Departures**

Whenever a student is absent, a signed, written explanation from the parent must be presented to the teacher on the day of return to school. An online form can be completed via the school website which is directly emailed to the school.

**Children who arrive after the bell at 8:40am are required to be signed in by a Parent or Carer in the office.**

***NO CHILD MAY LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS DURING SCHOOL HOURS WITHOUT BEING SIGNED OUT AT THE SCHOOL OFFICE.***

If a child is to be taken from school for any reason – eg. Doctor, Dentist appointment etc., a Parent/Guardian must sign out the child at the office **before** going to the classroom.

## **5.9 School Advisory Council**

Members are elected for a period of two years and meetings take place monthly. The School Advisory Council carries out the following functions in pursuit of its objectives:

- Planning for the present and future operation of the School;
- Providing membership of the panels for the employment of staff to the School in accordance with CECWA policy;
- Providing membership of the panel which recommends the appointment of a Principal in accordance with CECWA policy;
- Disseminating information about the School and about Catholic education to persons and organisations in the local Catholic community;
- Liaising in all matters relating to the financial management of the School with persons and organisations in the local Catholic community;
- Endorsing budgets and financial reports; and
- Advising the Principal with respect to School policy.

## **5.10 P & F Meetings**

These provide a good forum for gathering information about school happenings and a way to make a real contribution to your children's education. P&F meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month throughout the year except for holidays.

Members of the P & F:

- Strive to develop at the school a real community of parents, teachers and students;
- Work closely with the school Principal to achieve common goals;
- Act as a liaison between the wider school community and the Board;
- Ensure that a high level of social and educational interaction exists between home and school, parents and teachers;
- Endeavour to have all parents enjoy the experience of their children's formal school years by active participation and personal involvement in the school programmes;
- Provide a healthy forum for ideas and discussion;
- Work to provide additional resources which are considered necessary for the children;
- Assist in planning and organising functions with the social, sporting, cultural and educational life at the school;
- Organise guest speakers for the P & F Committee on current and suggested educational programmes, faith development and other matters of interest.

### **5.10 a P & F Events**

During 2022, the P & F supported the school community in the following ways:

- Hosted a Mother's Day event
- Organised a colour run for Father's Day
- Fundraised for school resources
- Put on a lunch for the teaching staff
- Organised a Footy Tipping competition
- Hosted a Welcome Morning Tea for new families

### **5.10 b P & F Contributions**

The P & F donate money to the school so purchases can be made. In 2022, money was donated so the school could:

- Install a new Nature playground for the children
- Subsidise Year 6 Graduation t-shirts
- Purchase classroom resources
- Support the Year 5 and 6 camps
- Support the end of year Music concert

### **5.11 School Fees**

These are set yearly by the School Advisory Council in consultation with the Catholic Education Office. Fees can be paid at the school office by cash, cheque, EFTPOS or electronically using Bpay information on school fee statements.

***A Direct Debit option for payment of school fees is available at no extra cost to parents and is the preferred method of payment.***

Holders of a Health Care Card coded **PPS** will receive an automatic fee reduction. **No child will be deprived the opportunity of a Catholic education due to a family's inability to meet fee payments.** Parents seeking further information should contact the Principal.

In addition to the tuition fee, amenities, booklists and levies are added, including:

#### ***Amenities Fee (per student)***

The Amenities Fee is charged to each student to cover the costs associated with the provision of resources to support their education. These costs include student consumables for various subject areas.

#### ***Book Lists (per student)***

Book list costs are included in school fees and will be distributed to children at the beginning of the school year.

#### ***Building Levy (per family)***

The Building levy is applied to all families for debt servicing school loans for capital (building) works.

#### ***Insurance Levy (per student)***

The Insurance levy is used to pay the cost of insuring each student whilst at school and/or on school excursions/camps, etc.

#### ***P&F Levy (per family)***

The P & F levy is an annual contribution to assist in the development of teaching facilities and resources for students.

#### ***Swimming Lessons Levy (per student)***

This is used to pay for children to attend Swimming Lessons in Term 1.

#### ***Technology Levy (per student)***

The Technology levy is used to purchase and upgrade necessary technology resources for the school, including associated software, hardware and infrastructure equipment.

### ***Incursion / Excursion Levy (per student)***

The Incursion / Excursion levy is used to cover the costs associated with supporting the educational programmes.

### ***Maintenance Levy (per student)***

The Maintenance Levy is used to support and upgrade necessary buildings and infrastructure within the school.

\*Other levies may be charged for specific programmes or year levels, such as attendance on camps, Yr 6 Leavers T-Shirts, Sacraments and the Clubs program.

## **5.12 Money Collection**

***All money should be returned in an envelope with:***

- ☐ ***The Remittance Slip if paying fees***
- ☐ ***Clearly labelled with Student's Name***
- ☐ ***Year Level***
- ☐ ***The amount enclosed and***
- ☐ ***The purpose for which it is intended***

## **5.13 School Uniform**

All students from Year 1 to Year 6 are required to wear their standard uniform every day except for sports days. Kindergarten and Pre Primary students are to wear the sports uniform each day. The Summer Uniform is worn in Terms One and Four and the Winter Uniform is worn in Terms Two and Three.

The purpose of a school uniform is to:

- Promote pride and loyalty in the school;
- Remove competition in dress, and
- Develop neat grooming habits.

Should a student be out of uniform, a note must be sent to school explaining the reason. If a reason is not provided, a note will be sent home to parents. Students are expected to wear their uniform in a neat and tidy manner even when outside the school grounds.

For sport, the children have two polo shirts – one is the faction colour shirt and the other is the red and blue polo shirt with the school logo. The faction coloured polo shirt should be worn when doing class sport, generally on a Friday. The school polo shirt should be worn during the Physical Education lesson with the Physical Education specialist teacher.

The “No hat, Undercover play” rule is implemented throughout the whole year. Students must wear the school hat during break times.

During the cooler months, many children wear additional clothing under their uniform. If this is the case the additional clothing should not be visible under the uniform (i.e. a long sleeved t-shirt under a short-sleeved shirt or long leggings under shorts). A spray jacket is available from the Uniform shop, however, is not to be worn in the classroom.

<b>GIRLS UNIFORM</b>	<b>BOYS UNIFORM</b>
<b><i>SUMMER</i></b>	<b><i>SUMMER</i></b>
Blue Checked Dress	Grey Shorts
Sandals or Black School Shoes	White Open Neck Short Sleeved Shirt
School Hat	Sandals or Black School Shoes
	School Hat
<b><i>WINTER</i></b>	<b><i>WINTER</i></b>
Red Tartan Skirt/Tunic	Long Grey Pants
Long Sleeved White Shirt	Long Sleeved White Shirt
School Jumper	School Jumper
White ankle length socks	Grey ankle length socks
Black Shoes – standard leather lace-up	Black Shoes – standard leather lace-up
Royal Blue Wet Weather Jacket	Royal Blue Wet Weather Jacket
*Girls may wear long grey pants if they choose	
<b><i>SPORT</i></b>	<b><i>SPORT</i></b>
Unisex Royal Blue Shorts	Unisex Royal Blue Shorts
School Polo Shirt	School Polo Shirt
Coloured House Polo Shirt	Coloured House Polo Shirt
White Sports Socks	White Sports Socks
School Tracksuit	School Tracksuit
<b><i>SPORT SHOES</i></b>	<b><i>SPORT SHOES</i></b>
Sports/Training Shoes/Sneakers	Sports/Training Shoes/Sneakers

The Uniform Shop is open each Monday afternoon from 1.30pm-3:10pm during school term time. Order forms are also available from the school office. Parents who are unable to attend the uniform shop can request items by sending the order and appropriate money in an envelope with their child or email: rita.willmott@cewa.edu.au. The order will be filled and sent home with the child. Some secondhand uniforms are available for purchase at the Uniform Shop.

- **Hairstyles:** Both girls' and boys' hair, which is longer than collar length, needs to be tied back. Hair should be tied with either black, blue or red matching school scrunchies, headbands, ribbons or elastic. No extreme hair styles are permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, mullets, mohawks, part or complete head shaving, patterns shaved into the hair, dyed hair and rats tails.
- **Jewellery:** Jewellery is not part of the school uniform and must not be worn. The only items of jewellery permitted are:
  - a wrist watch
  - one stud only in each ear lobe – no multiple piercings permitted (one earring in one ear only is not permitted).
  - a medi-alert bracelet / anaphylaxis badge (if required)
  - a simple necklace with religious significance, which may be worn under the clothing.
  - Please note that rings, bracelets, bangles and anklets are not permitted.
- Make-up and nail varnish/polish are not to be worn.
- **Scarves:** Children are permitted to wear scarves in Terms 3 and 4. Scarves are to be in the school colours. Football scarves are not permitted.
- **Footwear:** Skate Shoes, Boots and slip-on shoes are not suitable for school use and are not to be worn. **Standard black leather lace-up/velcro shoes** are the winter uniform shoe.
- All students are required to have a full tracksuit comprising of pants and a jacket.



School socks and tights need to be purchased from the uniform shop so that colour and style remains constant.

Students at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School are to wear their school uniform with pride and to maintain a high standard of neatness and personal presentation. Shirts should be tucked in. To maintain a whole school commitment to the correct wearing of our school uniform, students not in correct uniform are issued with a Uniform Infringement notice by their class teacher. Parents are requested to take prompt action in ensuring their child's uniform requirements are met after receiving an infringement notice.



### **5.14 Lost Property**

Parents are requested to clearly mark all items of clothing. No initials please. In the event of an article becoming lost, please check the lost property rack which is located outside the staff room.

### **5.15 Emergency Procedures**

The school has an Evacuation Plan and Lock-down Plan in case of emergencies. Sometimes parent helpers can be in charge of groups of children when an emergency or drill siren sounds.

Such helpers are asked to check the following:

- *That all their group are present*
- *That they rejoin the main class group as soon as possible by a safe route*

Emergency Evacuation and Lock-down drills will be practised on random occasions throughout the year to ensure that staff, parent helpers and students are familiar with how to respond in these situations.

### **5.16 Nut Aware School**

Due to children within our school community having nut allergies, St Thomas More does its best to keep nuts out of the school. We cannot guarantee that this will be the case. We ask that parents do not send nuts or nut products to school, particularly sandwiches containing Peanut Paste or Nutella, packets of nuts or cakes and biscuits containing nuts.

### **5.17 How to Approach the School**

Should you have a difficulty with an aspect of school, these are some of the ways they may be addressed.

These guidelines aim to:

- Provide a guide in order that concerns are dealt with in an open and fair manner
- Ensure the rights of students, staff and parents are respected and upheld
- Support sensitivity and confidentiality
- Help reach an agreed solution.



CONCERN	APPROPRIATE ACTION
The academic progress of your child	Directly contact the child's teacher either by note, email, phone or at an appropriate time to discuss any issues.
The welfare of your own child	For minor issues directly deal with your child's teacher to clarify information. For more serious concerns, make an appointment to speak to the classroom teacher or appropriate staff member. To convey information about change of address, telephone number, emergency contact, custody details, health issues etc please contact the office.
Actions of other students	Contact the class teacher for a classroom problem. For playground issues involving children from other classes, contact the classroom teacher or the Assistant Principal. <u>At no time should a parent chastise another child</u>
School policy or practice	Contact the office. State the nature of your concern and make an appointment to see the Principal or Assistant Principal.
Actions of a member of staff	If possible speak to the teacher personally and address issues in a calm manner. If not possible, contact the Principal or the Assistant Principal and address the issues in a calm manner.

\* If after speaking to the classroom teacher you feel the matter is still unresolved, please make an appointment to speak to the Assistant Principal or Principal.

## **6. SCHOOL HEALTH**

### **6.1 The School Nurse**

Community Health Nurses from the Naturaliste School Health Nursing team based in Busselton provide services to the school by arrangement and:

- Provide assistance with and monitoring of children with chronic medical conditions
- Undertake assessment on children (with parental consent) to detect and refer on, when required, conditions adversely affecting learning
- Participate in and provide assistance to health promotion and education programs
- Provide health related short term counselling and crisis intervention on health related issues
- Provide advocacy on health related issues when required

The nurse can be consulted by parents / guardians to discuss any health related issues affecting their children by contacting the nursing team on 9753 6475.

### **6.2 Health and Emergency Information**

It is vital that all details on the emergency sheets are kept up to date. If at any time your address, phone number or emergency contact number is changed, **please notify the school immediately.**

Sick children do not enjoy school and often spread their sickness to others.

Children who are too ill to remain at school will be sent home. Parents are asked to ensure sick children have recovered before returning to school.

### **6.3 Dental Clinic**

Children in all year levels are eligible for free dental treatment. No work is attempted until parents sign an authority to do so. The Dental Clinic is located at Rapids Landing Primary School telephone number 9757 8211.

### **6.4 Infectious Diseases**

Most schools suffer from periodic outbreaks of HEAD LICE. Parents are asked to routinely check their children's hair. Children must not attend school while either lice or nits (eggs) are attached to their hair. Your support **and above all patience** is important in this area. We require the following exclusion table to be observed in cases of infectious diseases. Please refer to this if needed – it could save a telephone call later.

#### **Chicken Pox**

A common acute, viral infection. Symptoms include fever, fatigue, and a generalised rash characterised by small vesicles (blisters) that rupture to form crusts.

**Infectious period:** From 2 days before rash appears until vesicles have formed crusts. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until well and for a least 5 days after the rash appears and until vesicles have formed crusts.

#### **Conjunctivitis**

A common, acute, viral or bacterial infection of the eyes. Symptoms include sore, itchy eyes and discharge.

**Infectious period:** While eye discharge is present. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until discharge from eyes has stopped.

#### **Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease**

A common acute, viral infection. Symptoms include fever, vesicles (blisters) in mouth and on hands and feet. This infection is not related to the Foot and Mouth Disease found in animals.

**Infectious period:** As long as there is fluid in the vesicles. Faeces remain infectious for several weeks. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until vesicles have formed crusts that are dry.

#### **Impetigo (School Sores)**

A common, acute bacterial infection of the skin caused by staphylococcal or streptococcal bacteria. Symptoms include itchy pustules and scabs.

**Infectious period:** As long as there is discharge from untreated lesions. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until the day after antibiotic treatment has commenced. Lesions on exposed skin surfaces should be covered with a waterproof dressing.

### **Measles**

A highly infectious, uncommon, acute, viral infection. Symptoms include lethargy, malaise, cough, sore & swollen eyes & nose passages, fever and rash.

**Infectious period:** About 4 days before to 4 days after rash appears. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until well and for at least 4 days after the onset of the rash, in consultation with Public Health staff.

### **Mumps**

An uncommon, acute, viral infection. Symptoms include painful, swollen salivary glands, fever, headache, painful testicles or ovaries.

**Infectious period:** About 6 days before to 9 days after the onset of salivary gland swelling. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until well and for at least 9 days after onset of symptoms. Consult with your Public Health staff.

### **Pediculosis (Nits - Headlice)**

A common, parasitic infestation of the scalp hair. Symptoms include scratching and the presence of “nits” (eggs) and lice in the scalp hair.

**Infectious period:** Until lice and eggs (nits) are killed.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced and live lice removed.

### **Ringworm**

A common fungal infection of the skin that usually affects the scalp, skin, fingers, toenails and feet.

**Infectious period:** As long as lesions are present. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until person has received anti-fungal treatment for 24 hours.

### **Rubella (German Measles)**

An uncommon, viral disease. Symptoms include fever, sore eyes, swollen glands (especially behind the ears), generalised rash.

**Infectious period:** From 7 days before to at least 4 days after the onset of rash. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until at least 4 days after onset of rash.

### **Scabies**

An uncommon, acute, parasitic infection, caused by a mite which burrows beneath the surface of the skin. Symptoms include intense itching between the fingers or on the wrists, elbows, armpits, buttocks and genitalia.

**Infectious period:** Until mites and eggs are destroyed. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.

### **Whooping Cough**

A highly contagious, acute, respiratory, bacterial infection. Symptoms include runny nose, cough and vomiting.

**Infectious period:** From onset of runny nose to 3 weeks after onset of cough. Refer to Doctor.

**Exclusion:** Exclude for 14 days from the onset of cough or for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.

## **7. SCHOOL PROGRAMMES**

### **7.1 Western Australian Curriculum and Differentiation**

Underpinning our school programmes is the Western Australian Curriculum. This framework sets out what all students should know, understand, value and be able to do as a result of the programmes they undertake in schools in Western Australia - from Pre-Primary to Year 12. Its fundamental purpose is to provide a structure around which schools can build educational programmes that ensure students achieve agreed standards.

All teachers plan programs based on the WA Curriculum that are targeted to meet the student's needs. Differentiation occurs in all classrooms across the school ensuring children are learning at their level. Student support is in place to assist those requiring extra help. We also have a Disability Support Coordinator who oversees and coordinates Students with a Disability or students requiring adjustments to their learning program or behaviour. There is also the opportunity for selected Year 3-6 students to participate in a Gifted and Talented program once a week.

### **7.2 Early Childhood Education Philosophy**

The Early Years Philosophy at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School is inextricably shaped by the Early Years Learning Framework, which is driven by the continual and progressive achievement of learning outcomes. All of which underpin the powerful ideal that all children have the right to a fair and equitable education; to prepare them to learn, adapt and live in a diverse and ever-changing world. Our indoor and outdoor environments provide opportunities for children to connect with others and learn through natural materials. Our environment encourages children to take an active role in their learning and be supported by experienced staff.

At St Thomas More Catholic Primary School as educators we believe children:

- Learn best where positive, reciprocal and respectful relationships are formulated between all children, families, teachers and the wider community.
- Learn best through play, which intrinsically engages them in hands on, real life, active experiences.
- Learn best through collaboration and communication with peers and adults in stimulating and interactive environments.
- Learn best when they have the opportunities to develop a strong sense of well-being and have agency in their learning.
- Are capable, imaginative, unique and inquisitive people who progress towards achieving their learning outcomes in different and in equally meaningful ways.
- Need endless ways and opportunities to learn through hands on experiences and to express themselves and communicate in different means/mediums inclusive of digital technologies.



### **7.3 Three Year Old Kindergarten, Kindergarten & Pre-Primary**

**Three Year Old Kindergarten Session Times:** Thursday 9.00am – 2.45pm

**Kindergarten Session Times:** Monday to Wednesday 9.00am – 3.00pm

Kindergarten is a non-compulsory year of school. Compulsory school attendance commences in Pre-Primary.

- A child may attend Three-Year-Old Kindergarten class at the time he/she turns three.
- A child may attend Kindergarten classes in the year he/she turns four by 30 June.
- A child may attend Pre-Primary classes in the year he/she turns five by 30 June.

### **7.4 Religious Education**

The Catholic School is a faith community which includes the Parish Priest and parents as well as teachers and students. It is a place where its members form a relationship with God and where Gospel values such as love, care and forgiveness and the teachings of Christ's Church are reflected in its policies. Religious Education is the first Key Learning Area of the school. Our Religious Education program is based on the Perth Archdiocese Units of Work and endorsed by all the Bishops in WA.

Religious Education lessons are conducted daily by each class teacher. The ideals of our Faith are also integrated into other subject areas. Throughout the year all classes participate in whole school Masses, class Masses, liturgies and/or prayer services. These celebrate and commemorate many different themes in the Catholic Church calendar. Parents are invited to participate in these celebrations.



An important focus for our Religious Education program is the preparation for the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation. Working in partnership with the Parish and parents, Catholic children in Year 3 will receive the Sacrament of Penance. Catholic children in Year 4 receive the Sacrament of Eucharist and Catholic children in Year 6 receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Students who are not Catholic will participate in the preparation and then support their classmates receiving the Sacraments. Dates for the Sacraments and Liturgical Celebrations are set at the beginning of each year.

### **7.5 English**

The acquisition of language is a developmental process. At St Thomas More, we aim to develop children as language users by fully immersing them in language in all its forms and for all its purposes. We provide whole language programmes linked to the Western Australian curriculum which integrate reading, writing, viewing and speaking and listening within a relevant and meaningful context.

Children are encouraged to share responsibility for their own personal progress and to think, question and evaluate their own performance within the process of language learning. Creative thinking and risk taking are encouraged within a success-oriented framework of strategies and experiences integrated across all areas. Whole language programmes offered focus on each child as an individual learner and allow for each child's literacy development to be carefully monitored and evaluated.

English is taught in a Literacy Block incorporating the areas of Reading, Writing, Spelling, Oral language and Viewing. Handwriting is also formally taught, following the style of the NSW font. The incorporation of synthetic phonics programs such as Letters and Sounds (K-2) and Sound Waves (3-6) helps build a whole school approach to ensure students are provided the best learning experiences.

The Talk for Writing program is implemented, which is aimed at developing students' writing skills by first targeting their oral language skills and building upon prior knowledge of texts.

## **7.6 Mathematics**

Mathematical knowledge and skills will be acquired by the children in the course of practical activities involving pupil interaction with concrete materials.

The chief aims of teaching activity based maths are to:-

1. Set children free to think for themselves
2. Provide experiences to discover the order, pattern and relationships of mathematics
3. Give children mathematical skills

Our Mathematics programs work to develop positive attitudes to maths' understanding, skills, knowledge and other intellectual abilities. Maths lessons involve either written or mental activities. The element of discovery learning often seen as play is of paramount importance in developing the above outlined aims. The meanings of mathematical terms are learnt by usage. Hands-on learning is an important aspect of the Mathematics' program and used to consolidate concepts taught.

The knowledge and mastery of basic number facts such as times tables, basic number facts involving the 4 processes, metric units of measurement, units of time, calendar skills and units of money is very important as the foundation stones upon which more complex concepts are taught. It is, therefore, fundamentally important that these facts are regularly practised and mastered via repetition and rote learning.

## **7.7 Humanities and Social Sciences**

Our aim in Humanities and Social Sciences is to develop in the children the concepts, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to live in their society and environment as responsible Christians.

Units of work covering the areas of History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business are studied. Our approach is resource and inquiry based - we aim to develop in the children the ability to question, research and to make the appropriate judgments.

**Aboriginal Perspectives** - Aboriginal perspectives are integrated into many subject areas. This is the study of past and present Aboriginal societies, which includes their history and culture. It is studied in context which promotes respect for all peoples and places, with an emphasis on understanding spiritual, political, social and economic issues central to Aboriginal societies.

## **7.8 Science**

We believe that Science should provide students with a means of learning about themselves and their environment through as many practical first hand experiences as possible. Science should develop in the child attitudes of curiosity, perseverance and enjoyment. We emphasise a problem solving approach, through inquiry and discovery. The children are guided to observe, measure, describe and to think creatively and responsibly about themselves and their environment through a variety of Science related experiences. Covering the areas of Physical Sciences, Biological Sciences, Earth and Space Sciences and Chemical Sciences, students are provided opportunities to pose questions, make predictions and investigate scientific solutions to problems.



## **7.9 Languages (Indonesian)**

At St Thomas More, Indonesian is the language studied by children in Kindergarten to Year 6. It is intended that the children will develop the knowledge, skills and understandings to communicate effectively and appropriately in a language other than English, as well as a cultural awareness.

## **7.10 The Arts**

Studies in the Arts learning area benefit students by developing creative skills, critical appreciation and knowledge of artistic techniques and technologies in Drama, Media, Music and Visual Arts. The Arts develop a sense of personal and cultural identity and equip the children for lifelong involvement in the appreciation of all forms of expression.

### **7.10a Visual Art**

Art education is viewed as an essential part of the total education of the child. All children are naturally creative. The concepts of line, colour, texture, shapes and form and space appear by chance in the artworks of students. These concepts, however, can only be put to effective use after the children have developed an understanding of them through structured, sequential art activities. Art programmes allow the children opportunities to express their ideas and feelings through techniques of drawing, painting, colouring, print making, collage, paper craft, textiles, weaving, and 3D activities. Through the engagement of an Art Specialist teacher, students are provided the opportunity to learn techniques, investigate different forms of art, including painting, sculpting, creating and drawing and engage with local artists and artworks.

### **7.10b Music**

All classes from Kindy to Year 6 have a weekly classroom music lesson. The focus in these lessons is on developing an understanding of the elements of music – rhythm, melody, harmony, form, style and expression. This is achieved by singing, playing percussion instruments, moving, listening and responding to music from a variety of styles and cultures. Children learn to read and write music, compose and improvise. At the end of Year 2, children are offered the choice of learning a musical instrument privately at school. Tutors visit the school and take small groups during school hours.

## **7.11 Health & Physical Education**

Health and Physical Education provides students with an understanding of health issues and skills needed for confident participation in sport and recreational activities. It enables students to make responsible decisions about health and physical activity.

Protective Behaviours are taught as part of the Health curriculum, following the Keeping Safe Protective Behaviours program. Students in Catholic schools are expected to follow this program and all staff have been inserviced in its delivery.

Physical Education is an important part of the curriculum at St Thomas More. Students will participate in one lesson per week aimed at specific skill development provided by the Physical Education Specialist and one lesson designed to consolidate new skills and foster team play and co-operation. For many sport units, modified rules are taught to ensure effective skill development takes place.

Kindergarten to Year 3 are taught basic co-ordination activities and simplified games. Years 4 to 6 are taught a variety of all major sports. It is of vital importance that children protect themselves from the sun. On Physical Education or Sport days, children wear their sports uniform for the entire day, including a hat.

During the year, children take part in a series of swimming/water safety lessons conducted by qualified instructors at the Margaret River Recreation Centre swimming pool. These lessons are an integral part of our Physical Education Programme and all children are expected to attend. Each year children participate in Faction Carnivals and also have the opportunity to participate in Interschool Carnival events. Our school belongs to the Leeuwin Sports Association.

### **7.12 Technologies**

In Technologies, students learn to apply knowledge, skills and resources in the development of practical solutions to problems. The separate areas of Digital Technology and Design Technology are taught. Students also have access to coding and robotics in these areas. If we are to give our students the best possible education and training for their futures, digital devices, computers and their associated technology are crucial. Students are provided with digital knowledge and skills that will equip them to function effectively in an ever-changing society.

St Thomas More implements a 1:1 BYOD iPad program from Year Three through to Year Six. iPads are used to support teaching and learning programs within the classroom. Kindergarten to Year Two classrooms are equipped with a small bank of iPads to support student learning. It is an expectation that Years Three to Six students bring their iPads to school each day fully charged.

All children have access to the internet. This access is controlled and every effort is made to protect the students from misuse or abuse. At enrolment, a form is signed agreeing to appropriate use of technologies. If students have been found to be using technologies inappropriately, privileges may be removed and consequences applied. Students are taught internet safety and how to use technologies in an appropriate manner throughout the year.

### **7.13 Active Learning: Incursions & Excursions and Camps**

At St Thomas More we seek to provide children with maximum opportunities to be active learners in the environment in which they live. To this end, opportunities for learning outside the classroom are provided to complement learning outcomes. Incursions and Excursions are planned to assist children develop concepts about their world in a way that connects life with school learning.

Throughout the year, teachers will notify parents about forthcoming incursions and excursions. Teachers go to a great deal of trouble to arrange maximum benefit experiences at minimum cost.

Camps are an integral part of our active learning programme. The Year 5 students attend a 3 day camp to further develop their leadership skills. The Year 6 students spend a week at camp on Rottnest Island. Important social skills of self-reliance, independence, awareness of others and acceptance of differences are developed as children learn to live with and respond to people outside the sphere of the home and school.

### **7.14 Homework Policy**

A school wide approach to homework has been implemented for children in Years 1 to 6 requiring the completion of homework each week. Teachers use homework to reinforce concepts learnt in class or for completing unfinished work at school. Homework will include Reading, Mathematics and Spelling/Sight Word activities. Homework is set at appropriate levels throughout the school, generally increasing in time as the children progress through the year levels. Parents should contact the teacher to discuss any issues that may arise regarding homework.

Parents are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards homework by making it a shared moment with their child. Homework is a means of forming good habits for later life and to encourage self-discipline, self-reliance, organisation skills and a greater sense of responsibility.

### **7.15 Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management**

In keeping with our Catholic school aim of educating the whole child, our Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policies work together on the basis of developing a sense of Christian self-responsibility and community in the children. We respect the rights of all students to be free from all forms of bullying and harassment.

Programs are taught in all year levels in order to develop a whole school understanding and approach to bullying. The children are helped to develop skills to deal with issues as they arise.

The CEWA Child Safe Framework underpins all practices and ensures the learning environment is engaging, safe and supportive.

#### **7.15a Behaviour Management**

We value the dignity of each individual as a child of God and we have sought to reflect this in our Behaviour Management Policy, which is based on Christ-like values and responsibilities of children, parents and teachers. We take the stance that no child's behaviour will be allowed to interfere with a teacher's right to teach or a child's right to learn. In particular, we believe that students should be rewarded for their co-operation, that the support of parents is important in effective behaviour management and that teachers should provide a positive, caring and consistent environment within their classrooms.

In each classroom, the teacher establishes their Classroom Behaviour Management Plan early in the year and ensures that students and parents are aware of the simple rules established to promote academic and social development in the classroom.

A Whole School Behaviour Management Policy is in place for both playground and classrooms. Accepting responsibility for personal behaviour, communication between school and home and the building of common rules for all within the school community are focus areas:

- ✿ Follow Directions
- ✿ Respect Others
- ✿ Respect Property
- ✿ Think Safety

## **8. SCHOOL RULES AND PROCEDURES**

### **8.1 Drop off and Pick Up Procedures - Drive-Through and Parking**

Limited parking is available within the school grounds. We encourage parents to park across the road at the Rec Centre or in the Church carpark. There is a crosswalk attendant employed before and after school to make sure that children cross safely and after school one of the teachers escorts the children who are walking to the crosswalk attendant.

A drive through, drop off and pick up lane is located at the front of the school. This is monitored by staff each afternoon. In order for this to operate effectively, once your child is safely in your car, parents are asked to promptly leave the pick up lane. Drivers are asked to pay attention to the *Stop/Go* sign after school, as often families are crossing the crosswalk, or buses entering the Drive-Through.



**No cars are to park anywhere along the Drop Off/ Pick Up Lane or park on the pathways.**

Your patience and cooperation is always appreciated when student safety needs to be considered.

## **8.2 Bus Travel**

Several buses service the school daily. Children are walked to the bus and supervised by a staff member each afternoon. If you wish to register your child for bus travel, please contact School Bus Services on **(08) 9326 2625** or apply online at **[www.schoolbuses.wa.gov.au](http://www.schoolbuses.wa.gov.au)**



## **8.3 General School Rules**

- a) Classrooms may be used by children during recess, before and after school **ONLY** when directly supervised by the classroom teacher.
- b) Children are to sit to eat lunch for the first 10 minutes of lunch break supervised by the teachers.
- c) No bicycles or scooters are to be ridden on the school premises before, during or after school. They must be walked through the school grounds. Children using bicycles or scooters **must** wear a helmet.
- d) Mobile phones are permitted to be brought to school, but **must** remain in the student's bag throughout the school day. The school will not accept responsibility or liability for any electronic equipment lost, stolen or damaged.
- e) Games that may cause injury to students or damage to clothing and/or school property are not permitted. All ball games must be played away from buildings. No games using equipment are permitted before or after school, unless supervised by a teacher.
- f) Children must **WALK** on all verandahs and corridors and be mindful of others.
- g) All who use the school are responsible for the general neatness of the buildings and grounds.
- h) At the end of recess and lunch periods, a siren will sound signalling children to stop playing and prepare to return to their classrooms.

## **8.4 Student Enrolment Procedure**

The procedures for enrolment at St Thomas More Catholic Primary School are listed in our enrolment Policy.

- All parents who wish to enrol their child and are in support of the school's Catholic ethos are invited to submit an Application for Enrolment Form, including all relevant details that might impact on their child's schooling. This may be lodged at the school reception along with a copy of the child's birth certificate, immunization certificate, Baptism certificate and data collection form.
- The submission of an Application for Enrolment Form does not guarantee an enrolment.
- An interview with the Principal will be scheduled with the parents and a letter confirming the offer of enrolment will be forwarded to the family.

The Enrolment policy, as issued by the Catholic Education Commission, is:

- Catholic students from the parish with a Parish Priest reference
- Catholic students from outside the parish with a Parish Priest reference
- other Catholic students
- siblings of non-Catholic students
- non-Catholic students from other Christian denominations
- other non-Catholic students.

*In exceptional situations the Principal may vary the above priorities.*

## **8.5 Communication**

Parents are recognised as the prime educators of their children, therefore a common understanding between teachers, parents and students is encouraged. Parent Information Evenings are held in each class at the commencement of the school year. If parents have any queries regarding their child's schooling, they are encouraged to make an appointment to discuss the matter with the teacher. After the meeting with the teacher, an appointment can be made with the Principal if further clarification is required.

Parent/teacher meetings and interviews are held in late Term One and early Term Two as well as necessary throughout the year so that parents can stay informed of classroom operations and the progress of their child. Feedback to parents is also provided through end of semester reports at the end of Terms Two and Four and through a Learning Journey night held in Term Three. The open communication between home and school is encouraged at all times. Parents are asked to seek information from the appropriate sources so that accurate information is received and queries can be responded to. Parents are communicated with in a variety of ways:

1. Emails – Teachers may send information to parents pertinent to their class via email.
2. SMS – Short reminders or urgent information can be sent via SMS.
3. Newsletter – Our main form of whole school communication. A newsletter is distributed to families via email each Thursday. The newsletter will provide whole school news and information happening in the school each week.
4. Written Notes – Information may be sent home regarding whole school or class events.
5. Facebook – Each class has a Facebook page set up where teachers may share class information with the class parent body. The school and P&F also each have a Facebook page to share information about the school and events.
6. Seesaw / Connected app

### **8.5a Parent Communication**

Parents are required to provide written notification to the class teachers in the following situations:

- Student absence (a written explanation is required in order to fulfill legal responsibilities)
- Students not wearing correct uniform.
- Students arriving late for school unaccompanied by a parent.
- Students not participating in class or school activities.
- Students leaving school prior to normal conclusion time.
- Students being withdrawn from school for an extended period of time.

**There is a dedicated line for absence notification. This number is 9758 8042.**

**The line will not be answered, please leave a message of the child's name and class. Online absentee notes can also be completed through the school website – [www.stmcps.wa.edu.au](http://www.stmcps.wa.edu.au) or the Connected app.**

## **8.6 Assemblies and Awards**

School Assemblies are held every Friday morning in the school's undercover area commencing with a prayer. Parents are encouraged to attend as children are presented with awards and birthday certificates. Each class will host an assembly twice a year to share their class themes and work. Check the newsletter for dates.

## **8.7 Parent Contact Details**

It is imperative that the school has an accurate record of your home address, phone numbers, doctor and emergency contacts. Please notify us if your details change.

## **8.8 Canteen**

The school does not have a canteen. The Margaret River Primary School canteen is used to provide lunch to the students on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Parents are requested to order their child's lunch via the QuickClick site. Lunch orders will be delivered to the school. A menu is available on this site.

# **9. 2023 STAFFING**

## **School Leadership Staff**

Principal: Mr Russell Wylie

Assistant Principal: Semester 1: Mrs Courtney Pisano and Mr Cameron McRae  
Semester 2: Mrs Nicolle Achmad

## **Administrative Staff**

Administrative/Finance Officer: Ms Karien Rollinger and Mrs Catherine Chilton

Administrative Assistant: Mrs Rita Willmott

## **Teaching Staff**

Three-Year-Old Kindergarten: Mrs Brittney Becker

Kindergarten: Mrs Jennifer Morrison

Pre-Primary: Mrs Merridith Newman (M-W) and Mrs Danielle Noble (Th-F)

Year One: Miss Jessica Farano

Year Two: Mrs Jane Wolf (M-W) and Ms Jemma Shoppee (Th-F)

Year Three: Mrs Marian Rowe

Year Four: Mrs Kristie Chapman (M-W) and Mrs Eliza Keet (Sem 1) and Mr Cameron McRae (Sem 2) (Th-F)

Year Five: Mr Thomas McDonald

Year Six: Mrs Sue Arthur (Sem 1 M-T) and Mrs Courtney Pisano (Sem 1 W-F)

Art: Mrs Renee Pates (M-F)

Indonesian: Mrs Myfanwy Walley (T-W)

Physical Education: Mr Cameron McRae (M-T)

Music: Mr Mike Goodwin (M & W)

## **Educational Assistants**

Ms Taryn Bradford, Mrs Rachel Hassall, Mrs Renae Cummins, Mrs Fiona Guise, Mrs Melissa Browner, Mrs Bianca Harding.

## **School Chaplain**

Ms Laurissa Knowles

## **School Grounds**

Mr Chris Luscombe

