



# St Patrick's Primary School St Arnaud

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# PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Dear Guardians,

We are currently preparing for the 2024 academic year and are looking to put forward our small school for your consideration for the education of your child/children.

St Patrick's is a Catholic school of around 110 students. We are constantly monitoring our literacy and numeracy practices and are excited by the growth that we are seeing in our children. Our school values wellbeing above all other facets of school life. We employ restorative practices in order to foster and maintain positive relationships among all members of the school. Our afternoon program, along with rotations, ensures that all our students have the opportunity to develop their sporting, artistic and musical talents. This allows our children to have a strong connection with the wider community and make valuable contributions to it.

At St. Patrick's, we see ourselves as an extension of the family by supporting the values and aspirations that you have for your child. St. Patrick's aims to be a safe, friendly, supportive and caring school community.

The school has excellent facilities. Our six classrooms are complimented by a separate art room, library and our wellbeing space. We have installed a large shelter to provide shade and shelter for the children to play under in the yard and an outdoor area for the Prep students to enjoy. We have completed a natural play area for our junior students. We have added the finishing touches on our Wellbeing Hub and we hope to complete our new, more modern and accessible toilet block in the very near future.

Many guardians find making the decision as to where their child/children will thrive best a tricky one. We encourage all parents to consider all schools, attend presentations, talk to other parents of school children and to consult with other education professionals.

This booklet is intended to inform parents about our school. We are very proud of our community and wish to let people know what we have to offer.

If you would like a tour of the school please make an appointment on 5495 1038 or call Trinity's mobile: 0439 951 034.

Regards, Trinity Johns



# RESOURCES AND FACILITIES

We have excellent facilities and resources at St Patrick's and each year we aim to improve them. Our classrooms are supported by an ART room and library which also caters for large gatherings. We built a large shelter in the yard which has proved to be very handy in both the hot and wet weather.



Every room has a large screen, whilst every student is allocated their own device. Our video conferencing equipment is used for online learning for large groups. We aim to utilise our technology in every learning area. Each student has access to a Chromebook within their classroom. While we are conscious of limiting screen time, we are determined to utilise technology in order to provide efficiency and flexibility.



# SUBJECTS AND CLASS SIZES

We are committed to having small classes at St Patrick's. Our aspiration is to have less than 20 students in each room. In 2021 we introduced a sixth classroom and teacher to cater for an influx of students. We believe that small classes lessen the need for restrictive behaviour management and enhances wellbeing for both the staff and students.

Our small school allows our children to interact, socialise and play with other children from different age groups. We feel that this allows our younger students to learn from our senior students, who are encouraged to pass on the positive behaviour that our school culture values. The older students are given the opportunity to be leaders and role models and experience at an early age the effects that good leadership can have.

## *Subjects currently offered:*

- ❖ Literacy
- ❖ Numeracy
- ❖ Religion
- ❖ STEM/ Science
- ❖ Library
- ❖ Physical Education
- ❖ Music
- ❖ Art
- ❖ ICT
- ❖ Stephanie Alexander  
Cooking and Gardening





# LITERACY AND NUMERACY

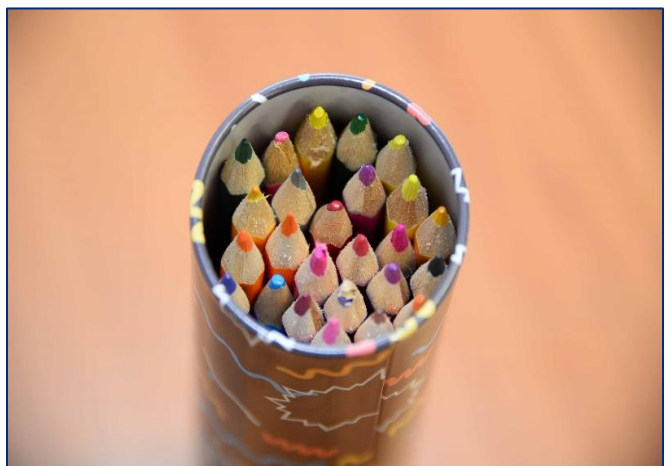
St. Patrick's core goal is to allow children to reach their academic potential.

From Monday to Thursday, the first two hours of everyday is devoted to Literacy. With the following hour after recess devoted to Mathematics

All teaching programs are designed after testing, collecting data and using evidence to ascertain students' needs. Every reading, writing, spelling and numeracy session allows time for whole group activities, ability based small group activities and time for sharing and reflecting.



We believe that when parents complete similar activities with their children at home It allows the students to progress more rapidly.



# RELIGION

We follow the Awakenings curriculum as mandated by the Catholic Education Office of Ballarat. In Religious Education, we encourage our students to sympathise with others, be aware of the Catholic tradition through the Church, be familiar with religious stories, be familiar with Catholicism and other faiths and live and behave in a respectful and Christian manner. Religious Education is taught for 2 hours per week. It usually involves reading a story, sharing ideas, discussing how that story affects our daily decision making, and responding more personally to the stimulation. Our children's religious backgrounds are varied; less than half our enrolments are Catholic. Our program caters for all students, ensuring that we include the teaching of secular values within our curriculum.



## LOTE: AUSLAN.... COMING SOON!

Auslan is Australian Sign Language, the native language of the Australian Deaf community, and is a visual-spatial, natural language with its own grammar and vocabulary. Auslan has linguistic elements, such as hand shapes (including orientation, location and movement), non-manual features (including eye gaze, facial expressions, arm, head and body postures) and fingerspelling. We are looking forward to introducing AUSLAN to our school curriculum. Benefits of learning AUSLAN include:

- increasing memory retention and motion processing.
- stimulating brain development and mental flexibility.
- increasing enjoyment in communicating for both hearing and the hearing impaired.



# MUSIC

Music classes are incorporated into our weekly routine. A professional musician leads our students (and staff) in choral singing and instrumental music. All students are introduced to musical notation and are given the opportunity to play instruments, such as marimbas, ukuleles and xylophones. Music occurs twice a week.



Many students have taken the opportunity to have private lessons. We have piano, violin, guitar and ukulele (which is a great introduction to guitar playing for those with little fingers). We endeavour to make private individual/small group lessons as affordable and as convenient as possible. We value our music program highly and look to develop it further throughout 2024.



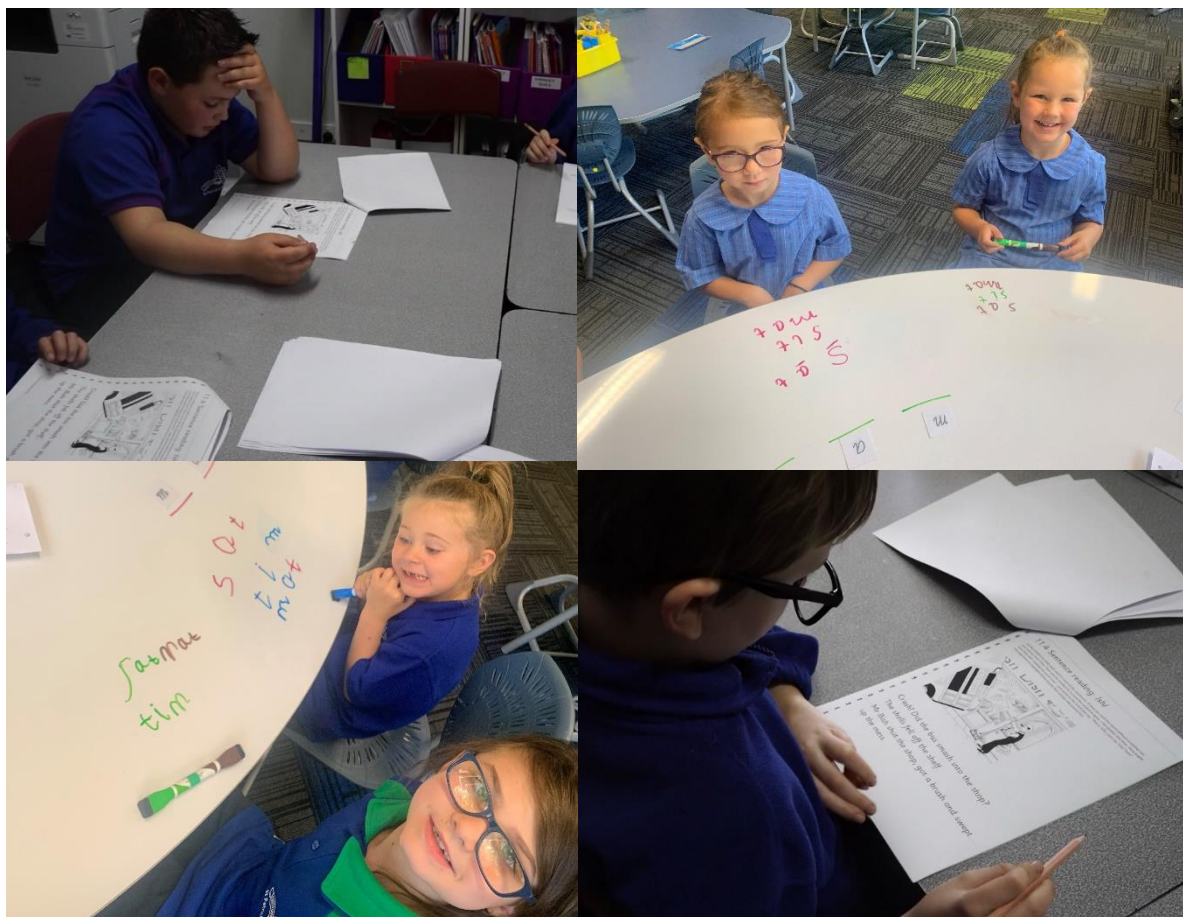
# SOUNDS-WRITE



Sounds-Write is an evidence-based phonics program utilising an exciting and highly successful approach to the teaching of reading, spelling and writing.

The program offers an instructional method that is structured, cumulative, sequential and explicit; all of which are strongly recommended for teaching children to read and spell. At St. Patrick's, this framework is used across all classes, and students have full time access to extra learning support, should they need it.

Sounds-Write is a highly effective program for children at all year levels and we are pleased to let people know that our staff undertake training and become qualified in this area. This program is used within our classrooms and as an intervention program.



# MUSICAL

All students are given the opportunity to perform on the stage throughout their primary journey. In Semester 2, we present a musical that involves all students dressing up and being part of one single story. Apart from nurturing a sense of community we believe that productions engage audiences; old and young, and showcase the development of our students. We invite/encourage various community groups to attend this event.





## WELLBEING AND BEHAVIOUR

St Patrick's is of the belief that children learn best when they are safe, happy and content. Our daily routine includes opportunities to socialise, exercise and take breaks. We believe that it is important to celebrate important events as a whole school. We commence the week with an assembly in order to share our weekend news, present various awards and set behavior goals for the week.



## STUDENT BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIPS

We have high expectations of the behaviour of our students. It is important that all of our students are provided with an optimum learning environment and we support our teachers in creating and maintaining a productive place to learn.

We utilise *Restorative Practices* at our school, meaning we attempt to *restore* relationships when dealing with negative behaviours. This strategy aims to teach the children how to apologise and how to alter behaviour that is unhelpful or unfair. It also helps the children to verbalise their actions and make better choices.

# COMBINED SCHOOL OPPORTUNITIES

Throughout the year our school joins with both Catholic and non-Catholic schools to participate in several sporting events:

- Summer and winter sports
- Athletics
- Cross-country

Also our school cluster, consisting of St. Patrick's, St. Mary's Donald and St. Joseph's Charlton, gather together for

- Catholic Education Week
- School football, hockey and netball teams
- Camps





# SPORT

Sport is becoming increasingly important at St Pat's as our numbers expand and students grow. This has meant that we have been able to host our own sporting days, such as our school *Cross-Country* and *Mini Olympics*. Students enjoy the rivalry between the two houses of **Xavier** and **Mackillop**. As a result, we have seen a notable improvement in student skills and our level of competitiveness against other schools, with many students achieving individual success.

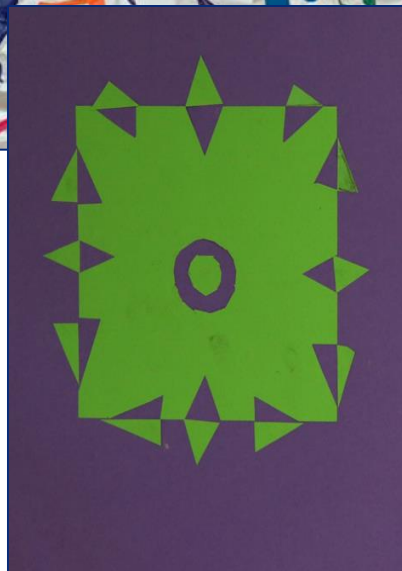
We have access to professional coaches and various programs, providing opportunities to build skills in athletics, hockey, cricket, basketball and football.

During our twice weekly sport classes, we prepare for athletics, cross country and other inter school activities.



# ART

Students attend specialist art classes 2 times a week as part of our rotations. Art activities are also intergrated into other classes. All students receive explicit art instructions and have opportunities for more experimental artistic experiences.





# OUR SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL



This council is made up of appointed and elected members from the school community. School Advisory Councils exercise a leadership role in the overall operation of the school through assisting with school improvement, representing the school community, offering informed advice and enabling community wisdom to be shared. Our council members are asked to put the students at the heart of every decision made. We welcome prospective members and encourage parents to become involved. Being a council member is an effective way to provide input and contribute advice, be a voice for school community members and actively support the Vision and Catholic Identity of our school.

# BlueTime

Our academic school day ends at 3:00pm, when our 'bus kids' leave school. All other students attend 'BlueTime'. This 20 minute period is an opportunity to complete a fresh creative task, such as cartooning, bushwalking, supervised board games, group challenges etc. It is also an opportunity for students to work with other students and other staff. BlueTime allows our students to finish the day doing an activity that is social, active and stimulating.





# SCHOOL BUS

In 2015 our school was fortunate enough to be able to purchase a school bus. The bus is big enough to accommodate each class, making the town and surrounding areas more accessible. This allows St Patrick's to utilize the community and to take our learning outside the school grounds.

The school bus has taken us to Melbourne, Canberra, Halls Gap, Ballarat, Warnambool, Anglesea, Maryborough, Donald, Charlton, Birchip, Bendigo, the Church, library and local sporting grounds. Having our own bus allows for flexibility, where we can stay at venues for the optimum amount of time.



# STAFF



**Trinity Johns**  
Principal



**Jane Battersby**  
Teacher



**Jo-Anne Baldock**  
LSO



**Christine Bridgeman**  
Teacher



**Jack Abbott**  
LSO



**Sheree Carroll**  
Teacher



**Katrina Cheesman**  
Office Administration



**Sharon Cole**  
Finance Officer



**Rachel Downes**  
Teacher



**Melissa Esmore**  
Teacher



**Chelsea Gravener**  
LSO



**Georgia Kirby**  
Teacher



**Claire Ostarcevic**  
LSO



**Karenne Pickthall**  
LSO



**Eliza Tillig**  
Teacher



**Gary Typuszak**  
Teacher



**Kathy Vallance**  
LSO



**Rosemary Walsh**  
Music



**Katherine Zoraya**  
Teacher



**Chris Campbell**  
Gardens & Maintenance



**Darren Shepherd**  
Gardens



**AnneMarie Webb**  
Cleaning

**Rosalinda Ryan**  
Cleaning



# 2024 SCHOOL FEES AND LEVIES

All Catholic schools in Victoria ask for fees to help run the school. That said, no student will be denied an education at St Patrick's due to finances. In order to offer the children of St. Arnaud a Catholic education we have:

- *A Financial Assistance Scheme*: Where some families are unable to meet financial requests, after consultation with St Patrick's, the fees are reduced.
- Managed uniform in a way that minimizes the expense for families.
- Kept our fees in the minimum bracket.
- We include all stationary and technology in our school fees.
- Daily excursions are also included at St Patrick's. In the case of a long distance overnight camp, a small fee may be charged per family. We endeavor to keep this cost to an absolute minimum.

## Fees:

**Prep/Foundation: Students receive a scholarship and fees are covered.**

**1 student: \$1300 total**

**2 students: \$1500 total**

**3 students or more: \$1700 total**

**Health-care card holders: \$550 total per family**

Although the school fees make up a very small amount of the funding required to run a school, we appreciate the effort of families to contribute. Most families set up a weekly direct debit, ranging from \$10 - \$50 dollars per fortnight.





