



Dear Parents and Carers

With the completion of 2024 and another busy and rewarding year in boarding, our enrolments continue to increase with many local, interstate and overseas boarding students finding a community and home at Saints. The year has been a successful one and we now start to plan and look forward to 2025. There are very promising signs for our dynamic Boarding environment, and we are very fortunate to be able to offer an inclusive, co-educational Boarding environment that caters for the needs of our boarders and their schooling. Our strong Boarding numbers I believe can be attributed to certain factors which include:



- exceptional pastoral care provided by our Boarding staff;
- improved academic outcomes for boarders as a direct result of the structured study program and tutor support system; and the
- regulation of electronic devices.

We are rightly proud of our Boarding community, and I hope that your association with Boarding in 2025 will be a most enriching and satisfying one for you and your family. We especially welcome all of our new families to the Saints community and sincerely hope that you will find the years ahead very rewarding and positive.

To ensure a seamless and smooth year, please take careful note of the 2025 Term Dates listed in this newsletter. Your support in adhering to these times will ensure a settled and productive environment for your son or daughter.

The College aims to be very consistent with expectations and standards surrounding the arrival and departure of boarders. To assist with this, the 2025 Boarding calendar fridge magnet will be distributed to all Boarding families. Please display this somewhere it can be easily referred to throughout the year.

The Boarding staff and I look forward to working with your family throughout the year. Please do not hesitate to make contact if you have any questions.

Best wishes for 2025.

MR BRETT TOOMBS
Director of Boarding

BOARDING ARRIVALS - TERM 1

Listed below are important dates for the first week of Term 1. To ensure a smooth transition into Boarding, families must email flight itineraries for returning boarders to sac.boarding@cns.catholic.edu.au so transport from the airport can be coordinated efficiently.

All boarders are expected back in residence on the day before their first school day. If there are exceptions to this, contact must be made with the relevant College Principal.

TUESDAY 28 JANUARY

- Welcome Meeting for all new parents and boarders 11:00am
- SAC & SMC all new boarders in residence unpacking 11.30am-1.00pm
- REACH Boarding software Information session for new and returning boarders 3.30pm
- SMC new student Orientation Program 12.30pm-2.30pm
- SAC Years 8-12 returning boarders in residence 4:00pm-8:00pm
- SMC Years 9 & 11 returning boarders in residence 4:00pm-8:00pm

WEDNESDAY 29 JANUARY

- SAC Classes commence
- SMC Years 7, 9, 11 commence
- SMC Years 8, 10, 12 returning boarders in residence 4:00pm-8:00pm

THURSDAY 30 JANUARY

- SMC Years 8, 10, 12 commence

2025 BOARDING HANDBOOK

All Boarding families will receive a hard copy of the 2025 Boarding Handbook. I encourage families and Boarding students to carefully read the contents of the Handbook. Included in this Handbook are our policies and procedures that make Boarding a safe and caring place with many opportunities across a wide range of areas. It is important that families read and understand our policy on extracurricular activities available in Boarding. Boarders have the opportunity to participate in one external/community activity per term and a school-based activity. This enables all boarders to combine their academic priorities with their sport and recreational activities.



Boarding Leadership Team pictured above from left:
 Mr Patrick Connell, Head of Senior Boys Residence
 Mr Brett Toombs, Director of Boarding
 Mr Ross McKeown, Head of Junior Boys Residence
 Mrs Desiree Price, Head of Junior Girls Residence
 Miss Savannah Vines, Head of Senior Girls Residence

BOARDING STAFF UPDATE

2025 further consolidates our Junior and Senior model of Boarding and we look forward to another stable year for staffing. Our four residences will be led by our very capable Heads of Residences. Mrs Desiree Price and Mr Ross McKeown will once again lead the respective Junior Girls and Boys residences. In our Senior Residences, we welcome back Miss Savannah Vines and Mr Patrick Connell who will guide and coordinate the respective senior students.

In 2025, we also welcome three new GAP staff who have recently completed their final year of school and are looking forward to joining the Saints Boarding community. Welcome to Ms Kirsten Price who is travelling from South Africa to be with us, and Mr Toby Baldwin and Mr Jacob Scholtens, who both attended Marist College Canberra for their schooling. It will be very nice to have Kirsten, Toby and Jacob joining Ms Gabrielle Rodriguez, who will return from France, to be with us for her final six months.

An integral part of the Boarding program is the extremely committed and dedicated staff that assist in the supervision of our students. We are very fortunate that we have a very low turnover rate in staff, something that greatly benefits our boarders. We are also committed to reaching our Strategic Plan goal of increased academic assistance within the homework program, and we will once again rely on teaching and non-teaching staff in tutoring roles.

COLLEGE PHOTO DAY

FRIDAY 31 JANUARY 2025

NQ School Photography will be taking the Student ID and Homeroom photos at **St Augustine's College** on **Friday 31 January 2025**. Group photos of all Boarding students are taken prior to the girls departing for school on photo day. Orders can be made online at www.nqsp.com.au using the shoot key **US8F3MUT**. Sibling photos can also be ordered online. **The St Monica's College Photo Day** will be held on **Monday 3 February 2025**.

COUNTRY DINNERS 2025

Boarding families are encouraged to come along to the Saints Country Dinner in their area during the year to meet staff and other parents. Proposed visits/dinners for 2025 are as follows:

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| Term 1 | Tablelands Visit & Country Dinner
Friday 21 March |
| Term 2 | Weipa Visit & Country Dinner
Thursday 1 May & Friday 2 May
Groote Eylandt Visit & Country Dinner
Thursday 29 May & Friday 30 May |
| Term 3 | Katherine, Northern Territory Visit
Friday 18 July – Sunday 20 July |
| Term 4 | Innisfail Visit & Country Dinner
Friday 17 October |

REACH BOARDING SYSTEM

The Boarding community uses REACH software for the daily running and organisation of Boarding. REACH provides students and families the ability to request and approve leave, which is a very important function and process of Boarding life. When a student requires to leave the College, a leave request must be submitted through REACH, and parents and the Head of Residence/ Director of Boarding must approve before the student leaves the campus. **A REACH Information Session will be held at the College on Tuesday 28 January at 3.30pm for new and returning families.** Early in January, families will receive an email on how to access the REACH system including passwords and login details. To access the REACH system go to staugustines.reachboarding.com.au

BOARDING TRANSPORT

The benefits of extra-curricular activities are well documented and for this reason, boarders' involvement is encouraged and supported. However, while a driver is available each day to drive boarders to and from activities, transport will only be provided to venues within 15 minutes of the College.

If parents wish to arrange alternative transport with a coach, relative, family friend or team member, this will only be approved via an **Extra-Curricular Activity Application**, on the provision that the increased travel time does not impact on a boarder's academic commitments (ie. study).

ABSENCES FROM DAY SCHOOL

Requests for leave that require a student to be away from the College or Boarding for a full day or greater must be made in writing to the Principal prior to leave arrangements being made. **Request for Student Absence** forms are available from the Parent Portal or the relevant College Office. The Director of Boarding or the Heads of Residence cannot approve leave from the day school, and Boarding leave will only be considered once a **Request for Student Absence** form is submitted to the College Principal at the relevant school.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE

Parents are asked to adhere to the College term dates and wherever possible restrict holidays or other periods of leave to the gazetted holiday periods.

Boarding students are granted a 'travel day' on the final day of term that will allow boarders from remote locations to travel home and arrive for the start of the school holidays. Weekly boarders will not be granted early departures for Exeat weekends or the start of school holidays. Please refer to the Parent Handbook for detailed information regarding this process.

WEEKEND RETURN TIME

On Free and Exeat weekends, students may return by 8:00pm or on the morning of school, on the understanding students are on time and ready for normal commencement. If students elect to return on the morning of school, the Head of Residence must be advised and details reflected in the REACH leave request. Late arrivals will see students forfeit this late return privilege. On all other weekends, students must be in residence for community dinner at 6:00pm.

Our Boarders' Mass at 7:00pm on non-Free or Exeat weekends is a condition of enrolment and is non-negotiable. It is compulsory for all students to be in attendance for this celebration.

STUDENT MEDICAL HISTORY

At the start of the new school year, a parent slip will be forwarded to all Boarding families requesting updated medical history for all Boarding students. We ask families to use this platform to disclose medical information that will be collated by our College nurses.

Students with specialised health needs or complex medical conditions may also require a Health Action and/or Management Plan (eg. anaphylaxis, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes). Please ensure these documents are provided to the College to ensure accurate and appropriate management of any health conditions while in the care of Boarding. Any queries about providing this information can be directed to our College nurses on sac.nurses@cns.catholic.edu.au

NEW GP FOR BOARDING

Dr Katherine Holzhauser will be the lead GP taking over from the wonderful care that Dr Omar Kahn and Dr Chris Haug have successively provided to the boarders of the Saints community. Graduating with First Class Honours from James Cook University in 2007, and obtaining her Fellowship from the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners in 2015, she brings with her a wealth of GP experience.



Dr Kat is a North Queensland local, and an owner and principal Specialist GP at Upward Life Family Practice. With a passion for wholistic health care, and education of medical students and GP Registrars, she has a special interest in excellence in generalist health care, mental health and complex chronic disease management. If students need to attend the GP clinic in person, it is conveniently located 1km from the school, with a team of 8 GPs, pathology and allied health onsite.

As an ex-boarder herself (Brisbane Girls Grammar) many years ago now, Dr Kat can also personally understand some of the challenges and potential for feeling isolated when living away from home and community.

With two teenage children, she is in touch with current concerns faced by parents. In her downtime she enjoys bike riding, gardening, music including playing piano and guitar, and will happily attend any live music event that comes to town! Dr Kat is looking forward to partnering with the Saints Boarding community to encourage access and continuity in GP care.

STUDENT MEDICATION

The College has a very consistent policy that ensures boarders who are on medication will be administered this through the Health and Wellbeing Centre (HWBC).

The College Nurse is responsible for the administration of medication in the morning, and the HWBC opens from 8:15pm to 8:30pm at night for student medication.

The **Permission to Administer Medication** form can be found on the Parent Portal or by contacting the College Office. For your convenience, a copy will be sent to all Boarding families. Parents need to ensure the form is completed and returned along with current medication when students return to Boarding in 2025. This form also includes consent for any Over the Counter (OTC) medications that may be required for your child whilst boarding. If these forms are not completed the nurse is unable to provide the required medications until authorisation is provided.

Boarders are not permitted to keep medication in their residences and/or personally administer medication.

IMMUNISATION PAPERWORK

St Augustine's College participates in Queensland Health's School Based Vaccination Program for all students in Years 7 and 10. The vaccination team will be visiting the College to give free vaccinations against Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine (dTpa) to Year 7 students. Year 10 students will receive the Meningococcal B and ACWY vaccines.

Vaccination dates for boys are listed below:

Year 10 - Tuesday 25 February

Meningococcal B Vaccine

Year 10 - Thursday 29 May

Meningococcal ACWY vaccine

Year 7 - Tuesday 14 October

HPV Dose 1 & dTpa vaccine

An information sheet and Vaccination Consent Card will be sent home to parents/carers of Year 10 boarders over the holidays. Year 10 parents/carers must complete, sign and return to the College Office so that their son can be immunised.

Information for Year 7 boarders will be distributed at the end of Term 3.

Information regarding vaccination program for girls is available from St Monica's College.

2025 REFURBISHMENT PROGRAM

We are excited to open Stage 1 of the Boarding Refurbishment Program in January, and our Junior Girls will occupy Upper Ambrose Residence when they return for the new school year. We are hopeful of securing extra funding during 2025 to continue the building program in Boarding.

Over the Christmas period, Stage 2 of the Building Refurbishment Program will continue, and the Lower Ambrose Residence will receive an upgrade that will allow the Year 10 Boys to move back into the residence throughout the year. If successful in our funding grant application, extra work will then follow in Lower Ambrose.

SOCIAL MEDIA

A reminder that photos and Boarding news can be accessed through our Boarding Facebook page.

For new families who use Facebook, follow the link below to join our page:

[St Augustine's College Cairns Boarding Community](#)

INFLUENZA VACCINATION

There will be an opportunity for boarders to participate in an influenza immunisation program coordinated by the Health & Wellbeing Centre. Details will be sent to parents early in Term 2.

BOARDING STAFF CONTACTS

The first port of call for issues in Boarding is your son or daughter's Head of Residence. Their mobile numbers and email addresses are listed below:

JUNIOR BOYS RESIDENCE (Years 7, 8, 9 Boys)

Mr Ross McKeown

P: 0419 652 916

E: sac.juniorboys@cns.catholic.edu.au

SENIOR BOYS RESIDENCE (Years 10, 11, 12 Boys)

Mr Patrick Connell

P: 0401 323 998

E: sac.seniorboys@cns.catholic.edu.au

JUNIOR GIRLS RESIDENCE (Years 7, 8, 9 Girls)

Mrs Desiree Price

P: 0419 652 108

E: sac.juniorgirls@cns.catholic.edu.au

SENIOR GIRLS RESIDENCE (Years 10, 11, 12 Girls)

Miss Savannah Vines

P: 0419 652 278

E: sac.seniorgirls@cns.catholic.edu.au

DIRECTOR OF BOARDING

Mr Brett Toombs

P: 0417 430 280

E: sac.boarding@cns.catholic.edu.au

2025 BOARDING

FREE/EXEAT WEEKENDS

TERM 1

Saturday 15 February & Sunday 16 February (Free)

Saturday 1 March - Monday 3 March (SAC Exeat)

Saturday 1 March & Sunday 2 March (SMC Exeat)

Saturday 22 March & Sunday 23 March (Free)

TERM 2

Saturday 3 May - Monday 5 May (Free)

Saturday 24 May - Monday 26 May (SAC Exeat)

Saturday 24 May & Sunday 25 May (SMC Exeat)

Saturday 14 June & Sunday 15 June (Free)

TERM 3

Saturday 2 August - Sunday 3 August (Free)

Friday 15 August - Monday 17 August (SAC Exeat)

Saturday 16 August & Sunday 17 August (SMC Exeat)

Friday 5 September (SAC & SMC Student Free Day)

Saturday 6 September - Sunday 7 September (Free)

TERM 4

Saturday 18 October & Sunday 19 October (Free)

Saturday 1 November & Sunday 2 November (Exeat)

Saturday 15 November & Sunday 16 November (Free)