

St James Catholic Primary School

Integrating Life and Faith

'St James School Community is committed to the Victorian Child Safe Standards'



Parent Handbook

2023

St James Primary School

51 Centre Road, Vermont 3133

Tel: 03 9874 1830

www.sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

Email: office@sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

At St James, we can feel safe, happy and ready to learn.

All information included in this book is accurate at time of printing. It is available on the school web page and will be updated from time to time as changes are made.

St James Primary School

51 Centre Road, VERMONT 3133

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Parish Contacts

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Parish Priest: Fr. Dispin John

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A letter from the Principal

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the 2023 school year at St James Catholic Primary School Vermont!

Some of you are commencing your association with our wonderful St James School while others have been here for some time. To those new members of our school community, I am sure you will discover the same environment and culture that I did 5 years ago. We have a very engaging, loving, inclusive and learning focussed school community here at St James.

Our school is part of St John's Parish, Mitcham. We value the partnership we share with many parish groups, especially St John's School and more recently Our Lady's Ringwood. Being part of the parish community provides us with many opportunities, rewards and an expectation of involvement. As part of this strong, vibrant parish community, we strive to ensure that our faith is nourished. The Gospel values are central to all that we do. There is a strong sense of belonging to our community as together we, "Seek the Spirit".

At St James, we strive to live out our Vision: "Seeking the Spirit, Learning to Love, Loving to Learn, Living Life to the Full".

Together we will form a learning partnership with you and your children. Together we will work to ensure that all children achieve their full potential. We pride ourselves on educating the whole person. The religious, social, emotional, academic and physical development of our students is vitally important as we strive to have every student be the best version of themselves they possibly can.

Our staff are highly professional, dedicated and motivated to support each student to achieve their full potential. We acknowledge and value the contribution that parents make to the education of their children and to this end we see it as essential that we work in partnership with you in the education of your child. Together we aim to deliver an education of the highest quality where each student constantly grows.

We invite all parents to be involved in the life of the parish and of the school, knowing that this involvement will assist in maximising educational outcomes for our students.

I anticipate 2023 will be another wonderful year for our school community and I look forward to working closely with you as a co educator of your children.

God Bless,



David Mutimer
Principal

VISION STATEMENT

Our Vision Statement encapsulates the essence of our school:

“Seeking the Spirit

Learning to love

Loving to learn

Living life to the full”



MISSION STATEMENT

In this natural environment of Vermont, we at St James, within the Parish of St John’s Mitcham, have as our purpose:

- To celebrate and engage the community in the Catholic tradition and heritage
- To make the values of the Gospel the mainspring of everyday teaching and learning

ANAPHYLAXIS MANAGEMENT

St James School has an Anaphylaxis Policy, which is available from the website. The school develops risk management procedures with parents of students at risk of anaphylaxis. Children are encouraged not to share foods or water bottles and to wash their hands.

We discourage the bringing of nut products to school. If students do so, they need to declare such foods to the teacher.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

St James School has an Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available from the school website. Bullying is described as “a **repeated** attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal in nature, by those in a position of power which is formally or situationally defined, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or satisfaction” (Schools Principal’s Legal Guide). We believe that all students have the right to feel safe and be safe in the school environment. St James is a ‘no – bullying’ school. Every effort is made to encourage people to share their concerns and these are handled and acted upon with a variety of strategies.

If you have a classroom problem or an issue, which needs to be resolved, the first point of contact is usually the class teacher/specialist teacher. Please allow the teacher or specialist time to investigate the situation.

If the situation is not resolved, then the Deputy Principal or the Principal should be contacted. If you have a complaint or concern about the school, you are asked to make an appointment with the Principal. (See also Complaints Policy on website).

Should you have an issue with a child other than your own, please ensure that you do not approach the child at any time but see the teacher/Principal.

ART SHOW

St James values the Arts. A Visual Art show is held every **second year** and showcases students’ work. This is usually held in 3rd Term. The school also enters the Catholic Education Art Show, which is held each March. The school is able to submit up to five pieces of work undertaken by individuals or groups of students. The MACS Office determines whether these pieces of Art are chosen for the exhibition. (St. James will conduct our next Art Show in 2024)

ASSEMBLIES / PRAYER SERVICES

Each Monday morning there is a short assembly (10 mins approx.) at 8:50am around the flagpole, in the quadrangle. Additionally, a prayer service normally takes place on every second Friday afternoon at 2:30pm. Our school captains host this service but each class or level is rostered to lead the school. Parents are notified via the newsletter. The service begins with a Religious Education and Prayer focus. All parents and family members are welcome to attend the assemblies/prayer services.

AUSKICK

Each Saturday morning in the football season, the St James School ovals are used by the local Auskick organisation. The organisers will send home contact and registration information as it becomes available. The school allows the Auskick organisation to use the ovals, but registration, supervision and organisation remains exclusively the responsibility of Auskick. **The Principal and staff are not in charge of students who participate in the program or use the ovals/school for Auskick.**

BEING GREAT CITIZENS

At St James, we are committed to creating an environment, which supports the development of effective Australian citizens, who have an awareness of the values and systems, which underpin our democracy.

We strive to ensure that our children develop the following:

- An understanding of, and commitment to Australia's democratic system of government, law and civic life.
- The capacity to clarify and critically examine values and principles that underpin Australia's democracy and the ways in which these contribute to a fair and just society and a sustainable future. These values / principles include – Care and Compassion, Doing Your Best, A Fair Go, Freedom, Honesty and Trustworthiness, Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion; all which rest comfortably in our Catholic ethos.
- The knowledge, skills and values that support active citizenship and the capacity to act as informed and responsible citizens.
- An appreciation of the experiences and heritage of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their influence on Australian Civic Identity and society.
- An appreciation of the uniqueness and diversity of Australia as a multicultural society and a commitment to supporting intercultural understandings within the context of Australian democracy.
- An understanding of the ways in which citizens and governments contribute to environmental sustainability in local to global contexts and a commitment to adopting values, behaviour and lifestyles required for a sustainable future.
- An appreciation of the influence of media, information and communication technologies on the views and actions of citizens and governments.
- An understanding of historical perspectives on Australia's development as a democratic nation.
- An understanding of the ways in which governance structures from other countries are similar to or differ from democracy in Australia.

BIRTHDAYS

Celebrating your child's birthday is a very important event. **Parents** are able, but are not obliged to bring a **small** treat for class members (**no nuts or fresh cream**). Our preferred option is actually non-food (e.g. bouncy ball, pencil, sticker etc.) For safety reasons, lollipops of any description are not permitted. It is most important that parents **check with the class teacher** in plenty of time in case there are children with food allergies. **The treat will be given out at the end of the school day to be taken home.** Birthdays will also be acknowledged at school assemblies. Certificates will usually be given on Fridays preceding the week of birthdays.

BOOK CLUB

The school acts as an agent for **Scholastic Book Club**, which offers books and items for students at reasonable prices. Catalogues are distributed once or twice a term and will be sent home in your child's mailbag. Parents who wish to purchase items can either purchase online or send their order to school. A parent volunteer manages the book club, and any queries should be directed to them.

BOOK FAIR

The aim of the Fair is to encourage our children to read books, and fundraise at the same time. St James receives a percentage of all sales, which we use to purchase more books for the Resource Centre. Scholastic is the Book Fair provider. We advertise in the school newsletter and around the school and encourage the school community to support this important aspect of our children's learning.

BOOK REQUISITES

Certain items are required to be brought from home and are not purchased through the school levies. You will be notified of this list at the end of the school year. Prep and new families will have this list sent/emailed to them.

BUDDY SYSTEM

A “**buddy system**” exists at St James for **Prep children** and **new families**. Each Prep child is given a grade six buddy to support in the transition to the school environment. The buddies meet regularly, particularly in term 1. Each new family is given an invitation to be ‘buddied’ up with an existing family. The aim is to support parents in the transition to the school and parish community.

CAMPING PROGRAM

Each Year 6 class join with their peers from St John's Mitcham to participate in a three-day camp at Phillip Island. The camp provides an opportunity for the children to develop and extend their friendships, experience a range of outdoor adventure activities and build teamwork skills. The parents meet the cost of the camp. The camp used by the school is an accredited campsite. We have a two-night camp for Year 5 at Sovereign Hill, Ballarat. This offers the children an historical perspective, especially with the experience of having two days in the ‘Costume School.’

CHILD SAFETY

Child Safety will always be a priority at St James. A Ministerial Order (No. 1359) has warranted a policy, Code of Conduct and Volunteer processes. These are available on the website.

There are many and varied initiatives to identify and reduce or remove risks. Empowering children about safety is an integral part of our learning.

CHOIR

St James offers the students from Year 3 -6, the opportunity to be part of the school choir. The choir performs throughout the year both within and outside of school. The choir practises each week.

CLASSROOM REPRESENTATIVES

Each class **usually** has one, two or more parent classroom representatives, who assist the class teacher and liaise with other parents and the P&F. Their duties may include getting parents involved in and facilitating social activities, fundraising activities and organising some parents to assist with the cleaning of classroom tables. It is not an overly time consuming role.

CLASSROOM HELPERS (SEE ALSO LITERACY AND MATHS HELPERS)

Parents assist in a myriad of ways including Art Show, Concert preparation, Mini Mission Fete, Sports, Excursions etc. One of the ways that parents also assist in the school is as a *Literacy or Maths Classroom Helper*. **Workshops are offered at the beginning of the year to give you insights into this *Literacy Helper* role. Attendance at these workshops is a requirement in order to assist in the classroom during the Literacy block/time.** Parents/classroom helpers are able to volunteer their time to assist in their child's classroom during the literacy block. Assistance may include listening to individual children read whilst the teacher runs a group activity, or assisting a small group of children with a set activity. Parent / Classroom helpers are also required in other curriculum areas from time to time. A roster for each term will be provided to parents who volunteer their time; with the dates and times, they will be required. Any parent assisting in the classroom must provide the school with an approved **Working With Children Check, Volunteer Form and Volunteer Duty Statement**. If you are scheduled to help in your child's classroom, in any way please ensure that you **sign in** at the front desk in the school office, before commencing. You must also wear a **visitor's lanyard**. Upon completion of your time in the classroom, you will need to sign yourself out and return your lanyard.

COLLECTING YOUR CHILD EARLY/LATE ARRIVAL

Any parent or guardian **bringing their child to school late / or collecting their child from school early**, including at recesses, must sign in and out at the school office on the iPad. **If collecting a child at a recess a parent must also see the teacher or office staff before taking the child from the grounds.**

- Students need to be punctual, *'It's cool to be at school!'*
- Medical and health appointments should be made outside school time where possible

COLLECTING YOUR CHILD AFTER SCHOOL/DROPPING CHILDREN OFF

Children are dismissed from their classrooms to the quadrangle/ playground area at the end of each day when the school bell rings at 3:20pm. A teacher supervises at the bottom gate (Frank Street) whilst another teacher supervises at the top driveway gate (Centre Rd). Parents are asked to collect their children from the quadrangle/ playground area outside their classroom or from the gates. Please ensure that your child/ren is aware of who will be picking them up. The teachers on duty **cannot** be expected to monitor each child leaving the school. As such, neither the school nor the teachers on duty can be held responsible for who collects your child at the end of the day. The teachers on duty will take children who are **not picked up by 3:35pm** to the office. Parents will be notified. If uncollected, the students will be taken to **Outside School Hours Care**, where you will be charged for supervision. For this reason, it is your responsibility to pick up your child promptly.

Parents dropping off their child/ren **from 8:30am** should do so at one of the two pedestrian gates on Centre Road or the back entrance from Frank Street. Children can place their school bags in the appropriate classroom area and are to play outside on the basketball /quadrangle area **until the bell rings at 8:45am**. Children are not to be in classrooms unless supervised.

Teachers commence supervision at 8:30am. **Children should not be dropped off prior to 8:30am.**

The **driveway gate** at Centre Road is generally closed during the day. The gate from Frank Street and the small gate on the western side of the school are both locked at 9am and re-opened at 3pm (approx.).

The pedestrian gate remains closed, but unlocked throughout the school day.

COMMUNICATION

At St James, we view the education of students as a vital partnership between home and school. Such a partnership can only come to fruition through communication, goodwill and highly professional staff working closely with understanding families. Communication at St James is facilitated through:

- Monday morning assemblies
- Fortnightly prayer services /student assemblies
- Newsletters
- Emails/ Texts/ Operoo
- Classroom/Level newsletters (periodically throughout the year – via email)
- Parent Information evenings/workshops
- Surveys
- Parent/Student/Teacher Learning Conferences (End of Terms 1 & 3)
- Written reports (End of Terms 2 & 4)
- At any time, parents are invited to look at their child's Google Drive account to see some of the work taking place in the classroom

At any time, teachers' welcome parents to **make appointments** to discuss their child's progress and wellbeing. If you wish to do so, please remember the **teacher's first responsibility is to the class**, so please **make appointments in advance**. Staff are very happy to return phone calls or to meet in person at convenient times before or after school. The Principal and Deputy Principal also welcome appointments to discuss issues at any time.

Staff emails addresses are their first name.surname followed by @sjvermont.catholic.edu.au e.g. good.citizen@sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

The office email address is office@sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

COMMUNICATION - MAIL BAGS

St James has a named, blue communication folder known as the 'mail bag'. These 'mail bags' are available from Spartan, our uniform supplier. This mailbag is used on a daily basis for teachers and parents to send information to and from the school. Please make sure you check your child's mailbag on a daily basis for important information. In the junior grades, the child's 'take home reading book' will also be placed in the mailbag.

CURRICULUM – VICTORIAN CURRICULUM

At St James, we are committed to quality education. We implement a comprehensive and inclusive curriculum. We strive to ensure that all students are equipped with the necessary skills, knowledge, values and attitudes to assist them to meet the challenges of a changing world.

St James provides an extensive and comprehensive curriculum using the Victorian Curriculum, developed to meet the needs of our students.

The Victorian Curriculum Prep – 10 sets out a single, coherent and comprehensive set of content descriptions and associated achievement standards to enable teachers to plan, monitor, assess and report on the learning achievement of every student.

The Victorian Curriculum incorporates and reflects much of the Australian Curriculum F-10 and includes eight learning areas and four capabilities. The eight learning areas are The Arts (including Dance, Drama, Media Arts, Music, Visual Arts and Visual Communication Design), English, Health and Physical Education, The Humanities (including Civics and Citizenship, Economics and Business, Geography and History), Languages, Mathematics, Science and Technologies (including Design and Technologies and Digital Technologies). The four capabilities are Critical and Creative Thinking, Ethical capability, Intercultural capability and Personal and Social capability.

Religious Education is also formally taught from years Prep - 6. St James uses the text, “To Know, Worship and Love”, as a major resource, supported by other varied resources.

We have many, very effective programs contributing to different areas of the curriculum because of the commitment of our professional staff, who possess the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to meet and be responsive to the various needs of the children.

CURRICULUM ASSESSMENT

Students at St James undertake a variety of school based formative and summative assessments in all curriculum areas. These assessments assist teachers to plan appropriately to meet student needs and to report progress. Each year, the students in Year 3 and 5 undertake externally designed National tests in Literacy and Numeracy. These tests are known as NAPLAN. NAPLAN tests are usually held in the first half of the year. Results are forwarded to parents.

CUSTODY/PARENTING ORDERS

Where a current court order applies to a family situation, the custodial parent is obliged to present original, official stamped custody orders to the office staff as soon as orders have been made. These will be copied and returned immediately. If there is a joint custody order, and parents are able to make mutual agreements (which differ from those within the Court Order) **it is both parents’ responsibility to ensure these agreements are clearly communicated to the Principal or delegate on each and every occasion.** The parents are to inform the Principal in writing of any changes to a court order as soon as it is made.

Should a parent require a newsletter to be emailed to them, it is their responsibility to provide an email address and inform the office staff and classroom teacher.

School Fees – Parents who are separated are asked that they place in writing and sign the agreed arrangements for the total payment of school fees and charges, for the year.

DISCIPLINE / BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

St James is a Christian community based on Gospel values of love, tolerance, respect and forgiveness. Our discipline approach is based on the Restorative Philosophy of repairing harm to relationships in a positive way.

St James draws upon Restorative Practices and Canter's Model of Assertive Discipline as the basis for its whole school behaviour support procedures. We strive for students to learn to be responsible for themselves and their actions and to make genuine, positive contributions to their community. A Restorative Practices approach allows classroom and yard incidents / disruptions to be dealt with in a manner, which sees conflict or wrongdoing firstly as an opportunity for students to learn about the consequences of their actions. It helps to develop empathy with others, and to seek to make amends in such a way as to strengthen the relationships that may have been damaged. Assertive Discipline is a program, which focuses on teaching students to take responsibility for their own behaviour.

A copy of the Discipline Policy is available from the website. (See also Restorative Practices in this handbook.)

DISPLAN

St James has evacuation and containment plans for emergencies. These plans are practised throughout the year.

DOGS

In the interest of community and safety **dogs are not permitted in the school grounds, nor are they to be tied up at the gates.** If parents bring dogs to school at drop off or pick up time we ask that they are kept on a lead and supervised on the nature strips at least 5 metres outside of the school gates. **Permission must be sought from the class teacher** should you wish to bring **any pet** for 'Show and Tell.' Permission needs to be sought well in advance.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

At the beginning of the year, parents are required to provide the school with health/medical and emergency contact information. It is vital that we have accurate information **at all times.** It is important that any alteration of contact persons, phone numbers, addresses or email contacts be brought to the attention of school office staff and classroom teachers immediately. This information must be recorded on our Operoo platform as well.

ENROLMENT APPLICATIONS

Applications for enrolment Prep - 6 are accepted **at any time of the school year.** An enrolment policy is available on the website, or within enrolment information packs.

Application for enrolment of students for Prep of the following year will be accepted up to the time of enrolment interviews, which will be held in **May or June.** After this time, Prep applications will only be accepted if there are positions still available.

Applications can be placed on waiting lists should they wish.

Letters of offer for Prep enrolment will be late term 2 or early term 3.

ENVIRONMENT

St James prides itself on caring for the environment. We have a duty to ensure that future generations can enjoy the flora, fauna, and resources that are on our planet today. Students, staff and parents are encouraged to consider how their decisions and actions affect their environment.

We strive to be environmentally friendly, through the reduction of waste, water and energy consumption and the inclusion of biodiversity programs. Each year, each Year Level focuses on the Environment through one of their Inquiry Units. At St James, we recycle and compost. We have vegetable gardens, chooks and goats. We also promote sustainability through our 'Wrapper Free Wednesday', encouraging students **not** to bring wrappers in their snack or lunch.

We promote a healthy, active lifestyle. In essence, we believe we have a responsibility to be caretakers of our world.

Our senior students have the opportunity to take part in our Gardener's Club, which plants and cares for herbs, veggies and flowers throughout the school.

EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS

Excursions and incursions are an important part of the school curriculum. Parents will be notified in writing, outlining excursion activities and seeking permission for their child/ren to attend. Information regarding incursion activities is usually placed in the school or class newsletters. Please note that a child **cannot** attend an excursion without the written permission of the parent/guardian. Costs for excursions/incursions are included in the Excursion Levy. A basic First Aid Kit, mobile phone and permission slips, which include a parent contact number, are taken on excursions, including sporting events. Parents attending excursions in a supervisory capacity must have a current 'Working with Children Check' and have signed a volunteer form.

FAMILY DIRECTORY

At the beginning of each year the Parent and Friends' Association (P&F), organise a school directory for parent use.

Information such as name, address, email and phone number are included on this list. For privacy purposes, your permission is required for your details to be included. Parents must note that the lists must be used for their intended purposes only – organising social events, plays, getting and giving information.

FARM DUTY

Families volunteer to assist with caring for our chooks and goats on weekends and during Term holidays. Eggs are collected and food and water replenished. Volunteers are called for at the beginning of each term. Volunteers are rewarded with the eggs laid by our chooks.

During the term, families can also purchase our fresh, free-range eggs.

FEES AND LEVIES

The School Principal in consultation with the school accountant and Education Board determine school Fees. The School fees are reviewed annually. You will be notified toward the end of the year as to the fees and levy charges for the following year.

In 2023 our School Fee and Capital Fee is **lower than the average of similar Socio-economic Catholic Schools in Victoria.**

The whole school year account is issued in February and reminder accounts are sent out in Terms 2 & 3.

Fee Payment Timetable:

At the beginning of the year, the total school fee payable will be issued to all families. Fees can be paid in various ways:

Parents may pay the total amount for the year at the beginning of the year.

Parents can pay over three instalments 1st, 2nd and 3rd Term.

Parents can make regular payment arrangements fortnightly, monthly or quarterly (Direct Debit/ Credit Card) through the office.

The school fees comprise

- An Annual fee per family
- A Capital fee per family
- Educational Levy, Excursion Levies and Books and Stationery Levy are per student.

In 2023, charges are as follows:

Annual Fee per family	\$ 2310.00
Capital fee per family	\$ 415.00
Excursion Levy	\$ 60.00
Curriculum Levy	\$ 450.00
ICT Levy	\$ 105.00
Books and Stationery Levy – \$ charged per year level per child	\$ 70.00 Approximately
Water Safety (Prep-4)	\$ 180.00
Water Safety (Year 5&6)	\$ 55.00
Camp (Year 6) - 2 nights @ The Briars (per child)	\$ 420.00
Camp (Year 5) – 2 nights @ Sovereign Hill (per child)	\$ 420.00
Interschool Sport Yrs. 5 & 6	\$ 120.00
Interschool Sport Yr. 4	\$ 70.00
Sacramental Levy Yrs. 3, 4 and 6	\$ 20.00

Payment is through Cash, Cheque, Credit Card or EFTPOS.

Payment arrangements for direct debits can be made. (see the office for more information)

Payment via internet to NAB Account: BSB: 083 347 Acct: 696463950 St James School

These fees do not include expenses associated with some sporting events or other events or activities including school and parish fundraising events. See also Parish Stewardship.

St James School, Vermont, as a Catholic School, receives funding from both the Commonwealth and State Governments. However, this funding does not cover the total expenses of the school. Catholic schools are required to cover the shortfall between total expenses and income received through various fees and charges.

School and capital fees together with Commonwealth and State Government grants pay the operational costs of the school. These include such things as salaries, building, ground and equipment maintenance, insurances, capital expenditure, computer equipment, power and water rates, heating/cooling, phone and administration costs, loans etc.

Levies pay for student educational costs such as stationery needs, curriculum/resource materials, photocopying, library books, excursions and incursions, sacramental programs etc.

Fee/ Levy Payment Timetable:

A **Fee Commitment Form** is sent to all families in December, outlining the costs and procedures for the following year asking families to nominate their preferred method of payment. Relevant direct payment forms will be enclosed. This form should be returned to the school office. **New families will be emailed late December.**

At the beginning of February, an account for the total school fees and levies payable for the year will be issued to all families Fees and levies can be paid in three ways:

1. Parents may pay the total amount owing for the year at the beginning of the year. **A \$100 discount applies if all fees are paid by the end of February.**
2. Parents can pay over three instalments 1st, 2nd and 3rd Term. See instalment dates below
3. Parents can make regular payment arrangements quarterly, monthly or fortnightly (Direct Debit) and quarterly or monthly (Credit Card). All regular payments will take place between February and November.

Instalment dates:

- Last week of Term 1
- Last week of Term 2
- Last week of Term 3

Parents may choose to share/split the payment of fees. Please confirm in writing or via email should you wish to do so.

Any parent who is seeking **special consideration for fee relief on School fees** should make an **appointment with the Principal** early in the New Year.

If you are having difficulty in meeting payments or cannot pay them by the due date, do not delay in contacting the Principal to discuss arrangements. **It is our policy that no child will be excluded from school because of genuine financial difficulty.**

Payment is by cash, direct debit or credit card.

Camps Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

Parents who hold a Health Care Card may apply for this Government subsidy.

Fee Collection Process

- Annual Statement of Account will be sent to families in February.
- Reminder Statement issued each Term.
- Follow up phone call if no response to letter received.
- Letter from principal sent to request explanation for late/non-payment.
- Meeting with the Principal/Business Manager if no response is received to letter or phone call.
- Consideration will then be given to forwarding the outstanding debt to Debt Collectors if previous steps have failed to elicit a satisfactory reason for non-payment

The Principal is always willing to discuss any issues relating to difficulties in paying fees. Communication with the Principal is vital.

Parish Stewardship or Parish Maintenance Levy

As a member of the Parish, (by rite of student enrolment at St. James) each family will have the opportunity to contribute to the Parish Stewardship Program, or pay a Parish Maintenance Levy. This contribution supports the many Parish programs and ongoing costs associated with the upkeep of our vibrant Parish including our school. Should parents choose to pay a Maintenance Levy this is invoiced by the Parish in May and October.

FIRST AID

St James has a **First Aid policy**, which is available on the school website.

All injuries or illnesses that occur during class time will be monitored by the classroom teacher and if necessary referred to the office for First Aid. When students in the classroom require First Aid, the classroom teacher will send the student to the Office.

All accidents or illnesses that occur on the playground at recess/lunch that may require First Aid are to be reported by the child to the teacher on duty. Each teacher carries with them a First Aid bag. The supervising teacher will attend to any minor injuries. Some student's injuries or illnesses require them to go to the First Aid room where a staff member on duty will attend to them.

If necessary, a parent of an ill child or in a parent's absence, an 'emergency contact', will be contacted and asked to take the child home and will sign the child out of the school. Where possible, **a parent will be called should your child receive a head knock, no matter how serious.**

All staff members have the authority to call an ambulance immediately in an emergency. It is the parents' responsibility to meet any ambulance costs.

Asthma Management:

In the case of a suspected Asthma attack, the staff member treating the student will refer to the Asthma Management Plan.

Students with a documented Asthma Management Plan are encouraged to either **keep their asthma puffer/preventer with them (if in senior classes)**. All children will have access to the **School Ventolin**. Each student should have their own inhaler, which needs to be labelled and is kept in the First Aid room, and used when students come to the First Aid room presenting with Asthma.

The onus is upon the parent/guardian to ensure that Asthma Management Plans are accurate and up-to-date, and that the **puffer is in date**.

A student who may appear to have difficulty breathing but may not be known to have asthma may be given Ventolin and monitored. Reliever puffers are extremely safe even if the student does not have asthma.

Allergies / Anaphylaxis Management:

At St James, some students may have allergies to certain foods, medications or substances. Parents must complete the Allergy Management sheet and give this to office staff should their child have any form of allergy. If your child requires an **EpiPen®** it is **essential that we have an Anaphylaxis Management Plan which includes risk management strategies (green)** in place. The student's photo is displayed in classrooms, staff rooms and offices to assist ensuring prompt action should it be required. Our school policy is available on the website. The child's EpiPen is stored in the First Aid room. *A new action plan is required with the replacement / updated EpiPen. It is to be reviewed annually, if not more frequently. These forms are available on the website.*

FOOD DAYS

Whilst there is no canteen, St James P&F organises a special lunch for the students usually once or twice a term. Food Day information is sent home with ordering details. Student orders and payments are made through CDF Pay with unique food day links. No cash sales.

Food orders must be completed on time or unfortunately, students will miss the special lunch.

FUNDRAISING (MINI-MISSION FETE, RAFFLE TICKETS ETC)

The Parents and Friends fundraise through a variety of activities. At the end of each year, the P&F donate these funds to assist the school. There is usually **one main P & F social fundraising function** each year. There are several other fundraisers.

The **'Mini Mission' Fete** is a traditional annual event held **during St James Week (mid - late July)**. Students in the Senior School prepare, advertise and host a range of stalls to raise money for causes and people who are less fortunate. Families are welcomed to come along and enjoy the festivities.

A 'Lap-a-thon' fundraiser is held some years. Students collect sponsors and run/walk around the perimeter of our school. Fundraising money usually goes to a project within the school. e.g. playground, technology etc.

The Parish also fundraise with both schools receiving money from the Parish. Our Fete is the major fundraiser held on the third Saturday in November. Raffle tickets form part of the Parish Fete fund raising efforts.

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM

Gifted and Talented programs provide opportunities for children of 'like minds' to participate in curriculum programs that will challenge them intellectually and help develop their individual talents. While we plan and cater for students within classrooms, we also sometime outsource these opportunities.

The class teacher nominates children for these opportunities. It is the decision of the parent to take up these opportunities. Programs are sometimes offered at different schools or locations. The programs usually run once a week across a number of weeks. There is a cost for enrolment/participation.

Programs vary according to the needs of students. Tournament of Minds is an example of such opportunities.

HEAD LICE

Head Lice and eggs do manifest from time to time in children's hair. Should there be an outbreak of head lice in a particular class or level then the grade level/community will be notified of the need for treatment through the school and or class newsletter/ email. Students can return to school once treated. Parents should check their child's hair regularly.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

St James is committed to encouraging our students to live a healthy lifestyle. To this end, we have various projects, which in the past have included Walk to/Ride 2school days, Marathon Club, and enjoy, 'Freggie' (Fresh fruit and/ or vegetables) snack each day. (See further information under these various headings). Children are encouraged to drink from their water bottle during the day.

HOMWORK

St James has a Home Learning Policy, which is available on the school website. At St James, we believe that homework should be planned to enhance learning, to provide practice and to encourage students to explore the world in which they live. We do not administer weekly homework sheets simply for the sake of providing homework.

HOME, SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The most effective Catholic Schools are distinguished, not by their physical resources, elaborate buildings or level of government financial assistance, but by their outstanding social climates, which give them a special ethos or spirit. The distinctive nature or ethos of such schools is an important element of their informal curriculum – that implicit, unofficial or unstudied learning which takes place through interactions and life of students, parents and staff.

Br Marcellin Flynn The Effectiveness of Catholic Schools

Linking with the home is important for all years of schooling, but particularly in the early years. There is a strong body of research to show that when parents, caregivers and the community are supportive of the work of the school and involved in its activities, students make greater progress.

There are many reasons for developing school, family and community partnerships. They can improve the school programs and school climate, provide family support and services, increase parents' skills and leadership, connect families with others in the parish and in the community, and help teachers with their work. However, the main reason to create such partnerships is to help students succeed in school and in later life. When parents, teachers and students view one another as partners in education, a community forms around students that is caring and supports learning.

It is hoped and recommended that parents become involved in St James as much as time permits.

Parents wishing to volunteer and assist with school activities or committees are required to have a current '**Working With Children Check**' and supply the school with a volunteer form and volunteer duty statement both of which are available on the school website.

ICY POLE DAY

The P & F sell icy poles to students on designated Icy Pole days during Terms 1 and 4 at a cost of \$0.50 cents per icy pole. On Icy Pole day, students must bring their \$0.50 cents (junior school students are encouraged to bring their money in a named envelope). Icy pole day is usually Friday, at afternoon recess.

In terms 2 & 3 the P & F sell other treats, usually lamingtons, for \$0.50 cents. On the last day of each term, at the conclusion of the day, there is sometimes a sausage sizzle.

ILLNESS

Please do not send your child to school if he/she is ill. If your child becomes ill at school, the staff may monitor and/or ring you to collect your child. If you cannot be contacted, the staff may choose to ring an emergency contact as listed. **Emergency contacts must live within reasonable proximity to the school.** Please notify the office of any changes in emergency contacts. Should a school staff member make a judgement that an ambulance be rung for your child, this will be done. The cost of ambulance transport will be at parent /guardian's expense.

Students are encouraged to wash their hands before eating, after animal or garden duty, and after using the bathroom. Please ensure children practise good hygiene habits at home.

IMMUNISATION REQUIREMENTS

Children entering St James at Prep Year and at any other level must present an Immunisation Certificate indicating their **immunisation status before** commencing school. To obtain an Immunisation status certificate –visit your local Medicare Office, email acir@medicareaustralia.gov.au, log on to www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/online. **Your child will be excluded from school if there is an outbreak of an infectious disease against which your child is not immunised or if we do not have a current immunisation record.**

Infectious Diseases:

The Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations require that we observe exclusions in cases of infectious diseases.

Refer to table of **Communicable Diseases** provided by the **Department of Human Services**, which indicates the minimum period of exclusion from schools for infectious diseases cases and contacts.

INCLEMENT/EXTREME WEATHER POLICY/SUNSMART

Our Sun Smart policy has been developed in line with recommendations of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria. As part of our general Sun Smart strategies, our school has a *'no school hat, no play'* policy.

- We have planned a Sun Smart timetable so the children have their longest play in the cooler part of the day.
- Students must wear hats when outside, at all recesses and outside class lessons from September to the end of April.
- Students without hats will be directed to sit under the verandas during recess times.
- Students are encouraged to use maximum protection sunscreen and use shaded areas for play. Because of health regulations, teachers are unable to apply sun cream to students. Students must do this themselves.
- Our classrooms are air-conditioned and on days of extreme heat (over 35 degrees), students are kept inside.
- Positive Sun Smart behaviours are encouraged throughout the curriculum and regularly reinforced through newsletters, assemblies and parent meetings.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Students in Years 1 – 6 are able to enrol in an Instrumental Music Program, with Online Music Solutions. Students can choose to play a variety of instruments, such as keyboard, guitar or violin. The company will charge parents who enrol their child /ren in this program separately. Contact **Online Music Solutions (Bronwen) 9874 6667** or **Justin Forster on 0410678584**, or email oms@bigpond.net.au.

Lessons are held on various days usually at lunchtime, afternoon recess, from 2.30pm and after school. Please note students who participate in the instrumental music program may miss class activities or curriculum concepts.

INSURANCES

St James School has **Student Accident Insurance** with Catholic Church Insurances. This policy covers students for accidents whilst at school, on school premises or whilst participating in school camps or authorized activities away from school. It does not include travel to or from school. For further information, please see the office staff or contact Catholic Church Insurances on 1800 011 028.

INTERNET USE

St James has Information Technology Guidelines and a Contract that outlines the use of technology at school. These guidelines and contracts can be viewed on our website. Parents are provided with student guidelines and a contract to sign at the start of each year. This provides an overview of the technology facilities available at St James and gives clear guidelines for students in the appropriate use of computers and the internet, including internet/email/social media. Inappropriate use and breach of the user guidelines will result in the withdrawal of ICT privileges.

MACS guidelines require us to seek written permission to use your child's image (photo or video) on our school website, blogs, newsletter, newspapers, magazines and/or CEO publications. This permission will be required at the start of every year.

INTERSCHOOL SPORT

Throughout the year, St. James students are invited to participate in various Interschool Sport events. In these events, students compete against other schools in our Box Hill District. Successful teams and students in these events then progress to participate and compete in the Whitehorse Division Sports and if successful again, compete in Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR) events and then onto State sport events. Teaching staff who are directed by School Sport Victoria (SSV) coordinate these events.

In Term 1, Year 3-6 selected students will participate in the SSV Swimming Carnival and Year 5-6 students will compete in the Summer Interschool Sport Program competing in either Hot Shots Tennis, Volleyball/Newcombe and Rounders/Softball.

During Term 2, Year 3-6 selected students will participate in the SSV Cross Country Carnival. Year 5-6 students again will participate in the Winter Interschool Sport Program competing in either AFL, Soccer, Tee Ball or Netball.

In Term 3, Years 4 to 6 compete in a House Athletics Carnival. The successful students at this carnival are selected to compete in the District Athletics Carnival. Students from this event are then selected to progress to Division, Region and State events if successful in their progression. During Term 3, we also participate in the SSV or Hooptime Basketball carnival. There are also a variety of opportunities for students in Year 5-6 to participate in elite sport trials. These trials are coordinated by SSV and students will be informed of these trials as they open.

LEARNING DIVERSITY

At St James, we have a Learning Diversity Leader. This position supports students who present with various learning and social/emotional needs. Students, who are supported through special funding from the Federal Government - NCCD Program, are included in this support. Regular communication meetings (known as PSG - Program Support Group Meetings) with parents, teachers and specialist support staff are held as required, usually in the third and the 4th week of each term. These students work on Personalized Learning Plans and/or Behaviour Support Plans, which the PSG team devises and evaluates over the year. Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools, MACS also provides Speech Therapy, Educational Psychology and Special Needs support and consultation to the school.

LIBRARY BORROWING AND LIBRARY HELP

Students borrow books each week from the school Resource Centre. Each student requires a sturdy library bag. PSW has St James Library bags.

Parents, who are able, are encouraged to assist the Resource Centre staff with the re-shelving and covering of school books. Requests are sent home via the newsletter early in Term 1 seeking assistance from parents. All helpers assisting at school are to have a 'Working With Children Check'. Further information can be obtained from the School Resource Centre Manager or Technician. Please ring the office if you wish to talk with the Library Technician.

LITERACY AND MATHS HELP PROGRAM (FOR PARENT VOLUNTEERS)

The school conducts a 'Literacy and Maths Parent Helpers Program' each year for parents /grandparents who want to be able to assist in the Classroom Literacy Block. The course is usually held over one or two sessions in the first term. In the past, the sessions have been run both at the beginning of the school day and in the evening but this is dependent on numbers. It is a requirement to attend the three sessions. All helpers are required to have a 'Working With Children Check.'

Attendance at these workshops is a requirement in order to assist in the classroom during the Literacy block/time.

LOST PROPERTY

Lost property is kept in plastic tubs at the back door of the office. The school does not take any responsibility for any lost items. It is cleared regularly and unmarked or unclaimed items will be given to our second-hand uniform shop or to St Vincent de Paul at the end of each term.

ALL CHILDREN'S POSSESSIONS MUST BE CLEARLY MARKED INCLUDING ALL ARTICLES OF CLOTHING.

LUNCH AND SNACKS

Students will have two main breaks during the course of the day. Lunch break commences at 11:00am. Eating of lunch is supervised until 11:10 am followed by playtime, concluding at 12:00 noon. Afternoon snack and playtime commences at 2:00 pm and concludes at 2:25pm. Please be reasonable with the amount of food you send with your child to school. Lunches are best kept in lunch boxes. For safety reasons students are asked not to bring canned drinks and glass bottles. Students' drink bottles are to be filled with water only, which students are encouraged to keep on their tables. Please ensure your child's lunch box is clearly labelled. In an effort to look after our environment please note **that all packaging/ glad wrap will be sent home in your child's lunch box. Wrapper Free Wednesday** (See Sustainability) and Freggie Time are opportunities where we encourage healthy eating habits, nutritious foods and snacks, including fresh fruit and water.

MARATHON CLUB

The students from **Year 3 - 6** are able to participate in a 'Marathon Club' each Wednesday morning beginning at 7:45am. Students run laps around the school ground. A breakfast of cereal and juice is offered upon completion at about 8.15am. There is a \$15 cost per participant per semester to cover breakfast. A staff member(s) and parents run/walk with the group. The Marathon group caters for various levels – walkers, joggers and runners. Students need to register. Forms are available on the website. For further information, please contact the parent coordinator.

MASS

During 2023 every Friday morning a class will be rostered on to celebrate the mid-week Parish Mass. This will begin at 9.00am. We encourage parents to come and celebrate with us. Whole school Masses and liturgies are also celebrated in the Community Centre, e.g. Ash Wednesday, Feast of the Sacred Heart and Feast of the Assumption.

MEDICAL AND CONTACT INFORMATION FORMS

At the beginning of the school year, an information form will be sent home to each family to be completed and returned to the school. If your child has an allergy then we ask that you come to the office and collect and complete an Allergy Action Plan, in **consultation with your child's doctor**. This enables the school to collect information on your child's allergy in order that the school can better manage allergies whilst your child is in our care. It is most important that all the information given on the medical information forms are up to date. **Emergency phone numbers must be accurate in case of emergencies.** Please notify the school should circumstances change.

MEDICATION

The school acknowledges that certain students may require prescribed medication during the school day. The school also realises that the administration of prescribed medication by the parent, guardian or appropriate medical authorities is not always possible at the prescribed time during the school day. **If your child requires medication during school hours the parent/guardian needs to complete and sign a medication form available at the office or from the website clearly outlining times and dosage required.** In the event that this proforma cannot be accessed, then a signed letter from the parent/guardian authorising the school to administer medication is required. This letter should outline clear instructions as to the dose and time medication is to be given. Medication can only be administered where instructions are clear. Medication will normally be administered by the school office or Learning Support staff, but if unavailable will be administered by any other member of staff.

Whilst every effort will be made to ensure that the student receives his/her medication at the prescribed time the onus is upon the student to approach the school secretary/delegate at the appropriate time. Medication will be stored in the school office, the staffroom fridge or the first aid cabinet. Medication should come in the original packaging, and be clearly labelled. Students who require daily and ongoing medication must supply an approved dosette dispenser, clearly labelled with the student's name. **Parents/guardians are able to come to school** and administer medication to their child.

Please inform the office staff and class teacher if you will be attending the school to administer medication. Students attending camp or excursions will be administered prescribed medications by staff attending.

No medication is to be kept in school bags or tote boxes or on the teacher's table.

MEDITATION (CHRISTIAN TRADITION)

Each Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, we encourage the students and staff to begin their day with Christian meditation. Music will begin to play through the speakers at 8.45am as a sign for students to move into their classroom. Meditation begins at 8.50am in each classroom and goes for 5 – 10 minutes. Students who are late are asked not to interrupt the class but to come to the office or meet the Deputy Principal, where they will meditate as a group. Parents are welcome to join in with class groups.

MOBILE PHONE USE

The school does not endorse students bringing mobile phones to school. Parents who wish their child to have a mobile phone need to complete a request for mobile phone use form. Student mobile phones are to be given to the office staff by the student on arrival at school and collected at the end of the day. The school does not take responsibility for loss or damage.

NETBALL CLUB

The St James Netball Club was formed in the late 1970s and has since grown to involve over 120 junior players. St James Netball Club has teams from under 9 through to under 17/19s competing within the Melbourne East Netball Association at HE Parker Reserve in Heathmont on a Saturday during Winter and Spring seasons. The club also supports the Fun Net program endorsed by Netball Victoria for Grade 1s and over, and is held at St James Primary School. **The Principal and staff are not in charge of the students who use the school for training purposes.** The committee/coaches /netball club are in charge. The aim of the St James Netball club is to promote and foster netball as an inclusive social activity.

NEWSLETTER

The school newsletter is **emailed** to each family every second Monday (Updates are sent on alternate Mondays), uploaded to the school website. It is a vital communication link between school and home and contains valuable information about what is happening in our parish and school community. We ask that you read it carefully each week, noting upcoming dates, and any amendments or changes to events. A brief newsletter from the Parents and Friends Committee is also included in the newsletter. Should you not receive the newsletter on any occasion, we ask that you contact the office.

Some families require a second newsletter. Should you require a second newsletter, please ensure we have a current email address.

NUTS IN LUNCHEES /SNACKS

As a number of students are allergic to nuts we encourage all families to be aware when organising lunches and snacks for their children. If a student in your child's classroom is anaphylactic to nuts or any other food products all families with children in that class will be notified, discouraging sending these foods to school. If students do bring foods to which another child may be allergic, these foods need to be declared to the class teacher. For further information, please see the Anaphylaxis Policy available on the website.

OFFICE HOURS

The office reception is staffed each day between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm. The school phone number is 9874 1830.

Email: office@sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

Newsletter email: newsletter@sjvermont.catholic.edu.au

OPEN DAYS

St James conducts Open Days in the first and second term for prospective new families. These Open Days are advertised in our newsletter, on our website, through the Parish newsletter and at Kindergartens and Child Care Centres. Should a family be unable to attend an Open Day please contact the office to make a suitable time, to be given a tour and to talk about our school.

OUT OF HOURS SCHOOL CARE PROGRAM

Camp Australia operates at St James. Before School Care begins at 7am and concludes at 8:30am and After School Care operates from 3:20pm – 6.15pm. The program operates from Room 16 (Portable). Families must register online if they wish to use the service. This enables families to make bookings, view statements and manage any details. Information can be sought from Camp Australia by phoning 1300 105 343 or from the website www.campastralia.com.au. Information is also available on the school website.

PARENT/TEACHER/CHILD COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING CONFERENCES

Communication between parent and teacher is an essential part of school life. We encourage you to see your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns. Learning Conferences are held in Term 1 and in Term 3 and students are expected to attend. Written reports are sent home in June, (mid-year report) and in December (end of year report). Over the year student work samples will be shared with families. The teachers may contact you at other times to arrange a meeting to discuss your child's progress. Teachers are available to discuss your child's educational progress at other times.

Given a teacher's lesson preparation, supervision and meeting commitments, it is best to make an appointment with the teacher, particularly if your query or concern may take some time. Making an appointment gives all parties the opportunity to give their entire attention to the issue.

The Principal and various members of the school Leadership Team are also available to discuss issues or the progress of your child. Please make an appointment by contacting the school office.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are very welcome at St James and make a valuable contribution within the school. The value of this partnership in Education is of great benefit to the teacher, child and the parent.

Parents are able to assist in many ways including:

- **Parish Participation** – We encourage our parents to be actively involved in the life of our Parish
- **Classroom Representatives**
- **Parents & Friends Committee**
- **School Advisory Council**
- **Literacy and Maths Helpers**
- **Library/ Resource Centre**
- **Working Bees**
- **Environmental and Sustainable Projects**
- **Excursions** – from time to time parents are asked by teachers to assist with supervision on excursions/incursions. Organisationally, parents are unable to attend all excursions. Unfortunately, in almost all instances, parents are **unable to bring toddlers** if they are in a supervisory capacity.
- **Swimming/Twilight Sports/Inter School Sport Programs** – Each year we have a swimming program and we require parents to assist the children, particularly those in the younger grades in getting ready to and from the pool. The senior children are involved in sports against other schools and parents may assist with training, scoring, umpiring etc.
- **To assist a parent must have a current Working with Children Check and complete the Volunteer process** (see website)

PARENTS & FRIENDS COMMITTEE (P&F)

Parents are invited to be part of the Parents and Friends Committee. This committee depends on parental involvement. The P&F meets regularly. Meetings usually go for about one hour. Primarily the role of the P&F is to support the life of the school through **social and fundraising activities** and extend a **hand of welcome and support**. By its very nature, it also provides a social network for all parents, a vital part of our community. Activities and functions are advertised in the P&F section of the school newsletter. We encourage parents to be involved in the P&F. For more information on the Parents and Friends' Committee and for how you can be a part, please phone the school and the secretary will provide you with the relevant contact details. Details are located on our website, and within our first newsletter.

PARISH SCHOOLS

St James and St John's are the two schools within the Parish of St John's Mitcham. There are very strong links between the schools and the Parish. We see ourselves as one Parish even though we are two separate schools. The Parish Team, consisting of the Parish Priest, Pastoral Associate and Principals meets weekly. The Religious Education Leaders from the two schools join the Parish Team once per month. Sacramental celebrations are Parish based. Staff from the two schools come together for some Professional Learning. Parish and school staff members prepare some Parish Masses and Liturgies. Students from the two schools come together for the Grade 6 school camp and to represent the Parish at various Catholic Education and community events. Parents from the two schools come together for the Sacramental Preparation and Faith Formation. The Annual Parish Fete brings all members of the community together. We expect parents to be active members of our Parish Community. We support the Parish in time, talent and financially.

PARKING

Students can be dropped off and picked up from the front of the school in Centre Road. Limited parking is available. There is also limited parking at the back of the school in Frank Street. The back gate is opened each morning at 8:30am. For the safety of all community members, it is essential that parents adhere to the parking signs, including time restrictions, in and around the school.

There is no car parking on the school grounds. Driving into the school grounds is only permitted for authorised purposes outside recess times i.e dropping off or picking up an ill student, deliveries.

PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE / 'SJV SUPPORT CREW'

A Pastoral Care Committee comprising the Principal/delegate and 2-3 parents meet each month to discuss the various pastoral needs of our community. Parents are asked to volunteer to contribute to a casserole bank or to suggest other ways that they may be able to assist within the community at times of need.

PERFORMING ARTS CONCERT

St James values the Arts. One year the school displays the students' Visual Art work in an Art Show, the alternate year the school celebrates the Performing Arts through a Prep - 6 School Production/ Concert. These events usually take place in the 3rd Term. Parents are asked to assist with props, making of costumes and artwork. The concert is held off site. In recent years, it has been held at Crossways in Vision Drive off Springvale Road, Burwood East. In 2023, the school will present the next Concert Production.

PRIVACY POLICY

Your privacy is important. The Privacy policy outlines the St James Primary School Vermont policy on the use and management of personal information provided to or collected by it. This policy is available on the school website.

PUNCTUALITY

'Make Punctuality a Reality.' It is very important for your child and for the class to begin the day punctually. If your child comes to school late, it disrupts their own and other children's learning. Students are to be in their classrooms ready to commence by the first bell, which is at 8:50am. On meditation days, the music begins at 8.45am and the students need to be ready to move to their classroom, when the music begins.

Students who arrive after 8.50am must be signed in at the office by their parents/carers.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN THE CLASSROOM

The children participate in formal Religious Education Classes each week within the classroom. The teachers plan these lessons using a range of sources including the 'To Know Worship and Love' text. Class and school prayer are also an important feature of our school. School assemblies begin with a focus on prayer. The children also participate in class meditation and class and school liturgies. The children will, from time to time, celebrate Mass as a class and as a school group. On occasions, we will come together with the students of St John's, to celebrate important occasions. Parents are invited to attend these occasions. St James School recognises that parents are the prime educators of their children in faith. The school alone cannot be expected to take on the development of your child's personal Faith and Religious practices. We can do the most for your child when our Religious Program supports a religious life, which is generated and nurtured in the home and within our Parish.

RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

At St James, we use a Restorative approach to support positive relationships. *Restorative*: means to give back: to repair the harm and rebuild; to reintegrate the person(s) who did the harm; restore a sense of wellbeing and connection. The philosophy and practice of restorative justice in schools is to promote resilience in both the one who is harmed and the one who causes harm. It is about helping young people become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and being supported in changing negative behaviour. Through this approach, we aim to assist all children to repair and rebuild when respect, trust and friendship have been lost.

RIDING TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Students are able and encouraged to ride to school by bike/scooter but parents are asked to ensure that children wear the appropriate and approved safety helmets. Bikes and scooters are to be placed in the bike shed. The school takes no responsibility for stolen or damaged bikes. For safety reasons, children and adults are asked not to ride on school grounds. **Students are not permitted to ride skateboards, roller skates or roller blades to and from school, unless authorized by school staff.**

RIDE2SCHOOL DAYS

In promotion of a healthy lifestyle on a designated day each month (Usually the 1st or 2nd Tuesday of the month), we encourage the students to be active and ride to school. Students in Year 5 and 6 are able to ride independently with parental permission, but students from Prep - 4 are asked to be accompanied by an adult. If students cannot ride to school, we encourage them to walk on these days. Data is collected from each class to ascertain participation rates, and posted on line on the Bicycle network website.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAMS

Reconciliation and Eucharist:

Children from the Parish who are baptised Roman Catholic are prepared for the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. Parents, as the First Educators, assist in the preparation of the Faith of their child. Students also undertake preparation as part of Parish and as part of their schooling. Parents, Parish and School work together across the seven years to educate the students in faith. Parents of students enrolled in Sacramental Preparation are asked to attend Reconciliation and Eucharist Sacramental Information and Faith Formation evenings throughout the preparation. The Sacrament of Penance (Reconciliation) usually takes place when students are in Year 3.

Students, usually in Year 4, preparing for the Sacrament of the Eucharist form small family groups. In these small groups they gather for a Home Mass and complete some family group activities. The students make their First Eucharist with others from their small group with the Parish Community. This 'First Eucharist' takes place at a designated weekend Mass with the Parish Community. This normally takes place in the first or second term. As part of their preparation, students and their families participate in several Parish Masses leading up to their First Eucharist. The students also participate in a 'Bread Making Day', which is facilitated by Fr Dispin and team members.

Confirmation:

The children in Grade 6 from the Parish are prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation every year. The Sacrament is conferred on the students as one or two groups depending on numbers, at a time designated by the auxiliary Bishop. The **Confirmation date is to be advised**. The preparation is undertaken both at school and at home. Families are encouraged to attend Parish Masses as part of the Confirmation preparation. The students from both schools attend a Confirmation Reflection Day and meet the Bishop prior to the Sacrament.

As First Educators in Faith, the school seeks strong support and expects active involvement from parents particularly during the Sacramental programs.

Non Catholic Children are encouraged to be part of the Sacramental Liturgies and may receive a blessing.

Baptism:

Parents wishing to have their child/ren baptised need to contact the Parish Office (9873 1341) or Fr Dispin.

SAFETY AWARENESS

Students are encouraged to be safety aware at school and travelling to and from school. Should a student feel unsafe or notice suspicious activity when walking or riding to school, he/she must report this immediately to school staff. Likewise, when travelling home from school, should a student feel unsafe they should report this to their parents who will need to report this to appropriate authorities including the school immediately. Students who walk or ride to school are encouraged to take the route home that has been discussed with their parents.

Parents are encouraged to talk with their child about safety awareness. Teachers will also promote safety awareness in classes or to the whole school.

SCHOOL ABSENCE

'It's COOL to be at SCHOOL.' If your child is not attending school, please notify your child's teacher and the school office by phone or email **before 9:00 am** with the reason for your child's absence. To comply with legislation office staff will advise parents/guardians of unexplained absences, on the same day, as soon as practicable, using an automated messaging solution (SMS). If no reply is received within a reasonable time, the school will attempt to contact any emergency contact/s nominated on the student's file held by the school. If there is no response, police will be contacted. Every child needs to be accounted for.

If your child will be away on a holiday during school time, please inform both teacher, principal and office via email. The school does not encourage student absences unless a child is ill.

If you are taking your child out for an extended holiday of more than 5 days during school term, we ask that you **ACT EARLY**. Talk with your child's teacher and together complete a **"Holiday Learning Plan"**.

Please note that when a child is away for a period, he/she will miss learning and teaching.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council comprises the Parish Priest, Principal, Deputy Principal, Staff Representative, a P&F representative, Parish representative (Parish Priest nominee) and Parents' representatives across the school. The SAC meets once or twice a term and discusses educational and organizational matters and advises or makes recommendations to the Principal. Items discussed are communicated via the newsletter.

SCHOOL BUS (TIMES AND PLACE)

At 3:20pm each day, a bus departs from St James to transport students' home.

The Bus Route is - **left into Heatherdale Rd, left to Good Governs, right to Purches St, left to Dudley St, left to Cochrane St, right to Orient Ave, left to Mitcham Rd, right to Canterbury Rd, left to Nurlendi Rd.**

Students are required to have a 'Myki' card to travel.

On the first occasion you wish your child to take the bus please notify the school office so the staff member on bus duty can assist.

The bus bell rings at 3:15pm for students to depart their class and meet the teacher on bus duty.

SCHOOL COUNSELLOR

St James employs the services of a school counsellor. A trained psychologist works with students in school time. This takes place usually on a Monday. The service is completely confidential and free of charge. Procedures for referral can be accessed from the school office or from the Student Wellbeing Leader.

SCHOOL POLICIES

The school has a number of curriculum and administrative policies, which are available on the school website. These policies may be subject to change and will be updated from time to time. Policies are ratified by the staff and generally by the School Advisory Council.

SCHOOL RECORDS

It is imperative that we have current information for our database and be able to contact you or the emergency contacts should the need arise. At the beginning of the school year, current information is sought and asked to be returned to the school promptly. It is especially important that the school office staff and class teacher be advised immediately in writing of any change of address or phone number, or medical information. In the event of an emergency, current information is vital.

SCHOOL TWILIGHT SPORTS/CLINICS

When children commence school in Prep or in other year levels, they are put into a House Team (Coghlan, Dillon, Lyons or Durkin). Families will all be in the same team. Each year a Sports Carnival is held at the Nunawading Athletics Track. (Date to be confirmed) This is a Twilight event commencing at approximately 4:00pm and concluding about 7:15pm. Every child competes in various events. **This is a compulsory school event.**

Throughout the year, the students participate in a range of sports clinics as part of their Physical Education Program. Various sporting bodies offer clinics to schools and we accept these opportunities as they arise.

SCHOOL TIMETABLE

School commences at **8:50am**.

Students go to their classrooms when the music begins which is at 8:45am. Where possible, the children in Prep to Year 2 are engaged in a 'Literacy Block' for the first two hours of each school day.

Music: 8.45am

Bell/ Day starts at: 8:50am

Eating Lunch: 11:00am - 11:10am

Lunch Recess: 11:10am –12:00 noon

Afternoon Recess: 2: 00pm – 2:25 pm

Bus Bell: 3:15pm

Dismissal: 3:20pm

Children are supervised by staff each day between 8:30am – 3:35pm

SCHOOL UNIFORM

The St James' School Uniform should be **worn well and with pride**. Students are to take pride in keeping their uniform clean and tidy.

School bags, hats and sports tops can be purchased **through the school**. There are a few **second-hand uniforms** items available also. **Please ring the school office who will put you in contact with the second-hand Uniform Coordinators. The second-Hand Uniform Shop opens once a month usually on a Friday and at other important times. (See newsletter)**

All other uniform items can be purchased through **SPARTAN School World**.

Visit the store: School World Bayswater North

1/210 – 214 Canterbury Road

Bayswater North Vic 3153

Telephone: 03 9070 8284

Email: onlineorders@spartans.com.au

Website: www.spartanschoolworld.com.au

It is expected that Summer Uniform be worn in Terms 1 & 4 and the Winter Uniform in Terms 2 & 3, given appropriate weather conditions.

WINTER (Terms 2, 3) SUMMER (Terms 1, 4)

Sky blue skivvy or polo shirt. (Long/ short sleeve) Sky blue polo shirt. (Long/Short sleeve)

Navy gabardine pants or shorts

School zipper jacket

School zipper jacket

Navy gabardine shorts

Year 6 School Rugby Top

Year 6 School Rugby Top

Plain navy socks or tights

Plain navy socks

Black shoes

Black shoes

Winter tunic

Check summer dress to be worn with
White socks

Maroon School Hat-School Bucket, School Slouch or School Legionnaire

School Bag

Polar Fleece vest (Optional)

School Sports Bag (Optional)

School Library Bag (Optional)

SPORT UNIFORM

School Sports Top (House coloured t-shirt for prep children, supplied by the school)

Navy, mesh shorts / Navy tracksuit pants, if needed

School zipper jacket

Plain, white socks

Runners

IMPORTANT

- All items are to be clearly named.
- Children are expected to wear full uniforms.
- **HATS** are a compulsory item of uniform from September 1st – 30th April. They are to be legionnaire, bucket or slouch hat design – maroon in colour.
- Grade 6 students are able to wear a special named rugby jumper.
- Sports uniforms and runners should only be worn on days of Physical Education classes and sporting events. Students in Marathon Club need to change into their black school shoes if they do not have sport.
- Girls' dresses should be of an appropriate length.
- No jewellery should be worn, with the exception of stud earrings, or jewellery that has special religious significance – e.g. cross. For safety reasons, this should not be visible.
- Long hair must be tied back and hairstyles appropriate.
- No nail polish

SCHOOL NURSE

A school nurse visits the school to check the hearing and vision of our Prep students. Parents are asked to complete and return a questionnaire and consent and return to the school. The visit usually occurs in 3rd or 4th term. If a parent has a concern about their child that they believe may warrant a visit from the school nurse, please contact the School's Learning Diversity Leader.

SECONDARY COLLEGES

The enrolment process commences in Term 3 and Term 4 of the year your child is in Grade 5. Key enrolment dates are published in the newsletter. These dates follow the same process and timing each year. Applications close in mid-August Year 5. Offers of places are sent out in mid-October. Close of acceptances is in early November.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (SRC)

St James has an SRC, which is a Student Representative Council. It is made up of an elected classroom representative and the school captains. The Student Wellbeing Leader coordinates it. The classroom representatives serve a semester and proudly wear a badge identifying them as the class representative. Meetings are held regularly during a small part of lunchtime.

Issues discussed may come from concerns from children in the classroom or whole school ideas, e.g. a playground roster to ensure all children have a turn on various playing fields, classroom sport tubs for use at lunchtime, etc. It is a great opportunity for students to have a voice in how their school runs when appropriate, and ways to make it a safer and happier place for all.

STAFF MEETINGS

The staff meet each week after school as part of their professional learning development. Meetings are usually held each Tuesday, Wednesday and some Thursday afternoons from 3:35 - 5pm. The Leadership Team meets regularly before school. Should you wish to meet with a staff member you are encouraged to make an appointment outside of these times.

STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The school acknowledges the importance and value of the children's efforts and contributions. To this end, awards are given at gatherings throughout the year, usually every Friday. If there is not a Prayer Service, then awards are given at the end of recess (i.e. 2.25pm). The newsletter will also acknowledge student achievement. Please let the office know in writing should your child's achievements occur at an event outside the school.

STUDENT LEADERS

Toward the end of the Year 5, students are given the opportunity to apply for various captain positions, which they will hold as leaders in Grade 6. In 4th Term, the Year 5 students undertake a unit of work on Leadership. Each student is able to apply for formal captains' positions. The students in Year 5 make recommendations and the staff have input into who is elected to formal captain roles. All Year six students are seen to be leaders, some having formal captain positions, others who through example are leaders to the rest of the student body and community.

STUDENT WELLBEING

At St James School, we strive to ensure that we are meeting the spiritual, academic, social and individual needs of students. Student Wellbeing is a whole school approach to assist our students to be confident, resilient, responsible and resourceful human beings. Our staff work to support students through a range of programs. Wellbeing practices are also imbued within curriculum areas and permeate our approach to and with the community. A staff member takes on the position of Student Wellbeing Leader.

SUPERVISION

There are three teachers on the playground during lunchtime and recess as well as Learning Support Officers. There is a teacher on duty on the playground before school, beginning at 8:30am. After school (3:20pm) there is a teacher on duty at the top gate (Centre Road) and another teacher on the bottom gate leading to Frank Street.

Students not picked up are taken to the office. If your child has not been picked up shortly after 3.35pm, they will be placed into Outside School Hours Care at parent expense. There is no teacher supervision prior to or after these times.

We ask that you collect your child promptly. If you are for some reason running late, please contact the school office and let us know. **Should you require 'Before or After School Care', information has been provided in this booklet. Information about registration for OSHC is available at the office.**

Extreme Weather/ Wet Days: If heavy or consistent rain at lunch/recess or it is deemed too hot or too windy, children will remain in their classroom and enjoy suitable indoor activities. All classrooms have heating and cooling. We ask that you provide your child with an activity book that can be put to good use on wet /hot days.

SWIMMING PROGRAM/WATER EDUCATION

St James children in Years Prep - 4 attend a 9-day intensive swimming program at Knox Leisureworks, Boronia. The program is usually held in 4th Term (late November / December) and **is a compulsory** part of the curriculum. The cost of the program including bus transportation, an hour lesson and entry into the pool each day is approximately \$180 per child. (To be confirmed)

An **Inland Waterway Program** is planned for Year 5 students and a **Beach Program** is planned for Year 6. Both are one-day programs run by Life Saving Victoria.

TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

In order to keep abreast of current educational trends; to provide the best teaching and learning environment for our children; to work effectively as a team with a shared vision, we as educators, recognise that Professional Learning is an integral part of the educational process. We are a community of learners. Throughout the year, the school has a number of School Closure Days for the professional development of the whole staff. Notification of the closure of the school will be given in advance usually in the newsletter/calendar. From time to time, your child's teacher(s) may be involved in Professional Learning offered by MACS, our school or other agencies. On some occasions throughout the year **your child's teacher may be at school but not be teaching the class.** On these occasions, the teacher is likely to be involved in Literacy or Numeracy testing/record keeping. On these days, a relief teacher will be employed to teach the class.

TECHNOLOGY

Staff use a range of technologies when planning, implementing and assessing curriculum. Students use a range of tools to make learning a more engaging, relevant and purposeful process. Technologies include interactive whiteboards, iPads, computers, chromebooks and other digital equipment. Cyber safety is a core component of the STEMM and Multimedia program and online safety strategies are reinforced throughout the school.

We are a GAFE School (Google Apps for Education). This means that staff and students have a Google account and use a variety of Google Apps. Student work is stored on Google Drive and they have individual G-Mail accounts.

TERM DATES

Term Dates for 2023

Term One:

Monday 30th January to Thursday 6 April

January:

- Monday 30 - Assessment Day #1 Yrs Prep - 6
- Tuesday 31 - Assessment Day #2 Yrs 1 - 6 (Preps start 9 - 12)

February:

- Wednesday 1 - All students attend classes 8.50am - 3.20pm

Term Two:

Monday 24 April – Friday 23 June

Term Three:

Monday 10 July – Friday 15 September

Term Four:

Monday 2 October – Friday 15 December (TBC)

THANKSGIVING MASS

At the end of each year, we have a Thanksgiving Mass for **all** our students and families to mark the end of the School Year. We celebrate the many contributions from all within our community and acknowledge the achievements of our Year 6 students and their families. These Year 6 students move to various Secondary Colleges but remain very much a part of the Parish.

TOYS

Parents are urged to use their discretion in allowing students to bring toys to school. Sometimes a small child likes to bring a 'special toy' or item to school for 'Show and Tell'. However, students are never to bring toys that could be considered dangerous or unsafe, including toy guns. Electronic entertainment devices are not to be brought to school. The school does not take responsibility for any toy/item that is misplaced, stolen or damaged. A teacher/the school has the right to ban a particular toy or game if it is considered by the staff member/the school to be disruptive to the class/play situations. Toys brought to school for play should be shared with other students.

VALUES EDUCATION

The Values taught at St James are Respect, Cooperation, Resilience, Persistence, Honesty, Justice, Organisation and Confidence. These values incorporate many other values within them and are encompassed by the values of the Gospels. We focus on these values, over a two-year cycle.

VISITOR'S SIGN IN REGISTER

If you are scheduled to help in the school in any capacity during normal school hours, please ensure that you sign the Visitor's Register, which is located at the front desk in the school office, prior to commencement. You must also collect and wear one of the visitor's lanyards. Upon completion of your time in the school, you will need to sign yourself out on the iPad and return to your lanyard. Any parent assisting our school on committees, in classrooms, or on authorized activities must have an approved, '**Working With Children Check**', a current Volunteer application and a Volunteer Duty Statement.

During COVID times we have a QR Code sign in system as well.

VISITS BY PARENTS

Parents are reminded that should they wish to check on their child or leave a message for him/her then it is to be done through the school office. Parents and relatives are **NOT** to visit their child in class time. Parents are able to assist within the classroom programs as organised by the classroom teacher and by following appropriate procedures.

VOLUNTEERS

Child Safety will always be a priority at St James. A Ministerial Order (No. 1359) has warranted a policy, Code of Conduct and **Volunteer processes**. These are available on the website.

WORKING BEES/ MAINTENANCE

We take pride in the presentation of our school grounds and strive to maintain a safe and attractive environment for our students. To help with this maintenance, the Maintenance Committee organises a Working Bee each term. This day and time may be varied to accommodate family commitments. Working Bees are held either Friday evenings, (Daylight Saving) or on Saturday or Sunday mornings. Participation from each family is encouraged and expected. Each family should attend a minimum of one working bee at the school. Attendance at working bees can give some of the parents unable to make other events, an opportunity to contribute to the school and an opportunity for social interaction at the traditional sausage sizzle afterwards. Dates and details are communicated through the school newsletter.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

All parent volunteers who wish to assist our school on committees, in classrooms, or on authorized activities must have an approved '**Working With Children Check**.' Application forms can be sought online at www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Parents must sign in at the school office before working in classrooms or beginning any authorised activity. Parents must sign out upon completion. For further information, please refer to the WWCC Policy available on the website.

FURTHER ENQUIRIES

Should there be any other queries other than those covered within this booklet, please do not hesitate to speak to any member of the school team. Together we can build a community where people matter and a place where we all feel at home. Queries, comments and suggestions are always most welcomed. We look forward to working with you and your child.