



ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
GATESHEAD

PARENT HANDBOOK

UPDATED MARCH 2024



LOVE ONE ANOTHER



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It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to St Paul's Primary School. St Paul's Primary School is an integral part of Mackillop Parish, providing quality teaching and learning with Catholic values, traditions, beliefs and ethos, as well as fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect and acceptance where all differences are valued and appreciated. Our community recognises the potential and dignity of each student and aims to provide sequential academic development within a positive structure of spiritual, emotional and physical growth. We proudly provide contemporary future focused education in a Culture of Thinking, for all children.

Throughout the year our community celebrates many academic, cultural and sporting achievements which clearly indicate the progress and development that are integral to the growth of the school.

St Paul's Primary School is supported by an active and enthusiastic community which reflects the values

and ethos of our school motto Love One Another. The school is indebted to the many parents who give so freely of their time to support the staff and students in all new and ongoing initiatives by not only being actively involved in fundraising but also community building.

All teachers at St Paul's have a strong commitment to the education of all students. Their participation in school-based initiatives and the care and concern taken to ensure every child strives to reach their full potential are indicative of their effort and dedication.

It is the collaborative partnership between school, home and parish that ensures St Paul's Primary School continues to grow as a dynamic learning community.

It is a privilege to be a part your child's learning journey. Together in partnership, we can achieve great things!

GREG CUMMING
Principal

ST PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, GATESHEAD

THE SCHOOL CREST

The sword is the symbol of St Paul. The book symbolises a place of learning while the dove is representative of the Holy Spirit and Peace. In the dove's beak is a cherry branch – the symbol of good works.

The motto is taken from John 13:34

"And now I give you a new commandment, love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."



THE HISTORY OF ST PAUL'S

The Parish of St Paul's, Gateshead, was established on Sunday, December 1, 1963. On this day Mass was celebrated in the assembly hall of St Mary's High School by Father Roger Kennedy.

The Sisters of St Joseph were invited to staff a primary school in the parish. This they did from early 1964. The first school building was officially opened on May 12, 1964, and the first principal was Sr Kilian. There was a total of 90 pupils in Kinder to Year 3.

Since the retirement of Sr Loretta Mary as Principal in 1984, lay teachers have staffed the school. We are challenged to ensure that the spiritual values in the tradition of the Sisters of St Joseph, so well fostered in the past, are continued.

As a result of Commonwealth funding and parish and school contributions, a new school was built in 2002. Further funding allowed for extensions which included a

school hall and STEM lab to be added in 2011. In 2012, a large multi-purpose hall, The Josephite Centre, was built on the lower level of the field.

St Paul's is now able to continue the challenges of the past as well as providing the physical environment to prepare our students for the educational demands of the twenty-first century.



ST. PAUL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL

The concept of ethos refers to the fundamental purpose of the school. When we speak about ethos, we are describing the core beliefs of the whole community. What is it about Catholic schools that you would want to send your child here? If you are clear about this, then your expectations of the school will be realistic and purposeful.

A school's culture is not always easy to identify. School culture is the collection of shared values and images which mark our identity. The school community of St Paul's shares values which are based on unity, friendship and integrity. Our identity grows stronger with each passing year as parents, students and staff work together to fulfil our commitment.

**We at St Paul's have a commitment to quality Catholic education.
Our core beliefs are focused on the following:**

1. We are a religious school.

The students are presented with opportunities through curriculum and the life of the school to engage in religious learning, celebrations, rituals and ethics of the Catholic Church.

2. The presence of Jesus is evident in our school's culture.

The person of Jesus is the foundation stone of the Catholic school. His teachings and ministry are the cornerstone. They give character and focus to the spirit of our school. Our commitment to Gospel values is evidenced in the various levels of school activity and policies. The school not only presents religious knowledge to the children but witnesses Gospel values with and for them.

3. We provide quality education.

A good Catholic school is committed to pursue the best possible education for its students. St Paul's is a place of learning and education within a national system of schooling. Students in our school are helped to acquire the competencies which will enable them to enter the workforce and be positive citizens. Quality learning will involve learning in a technological age, understanding and appreciating things of aesthetic quality as well as nurturing physical well-being.

4. The school is a community.

Students at our school need to feel valued and be given a genuine experience of belonging. One of the hallmarks of this community will be the quality of its caring. The same must apply for the parents and staff. Community building involves relating to each other in a spirit of reconciliation and compassion.



Kinder Transition - 'Kinder Yaama'

At St Paul's we aim to ensure the transition into Kindergarten is a smooth and positive experience for all students.

We have a comprehensive Kindergarten transition program, Kinder Yaama, that ensures moving from preschool to primary school is a smooth learning experience for students to easily adapt and settle in.

Kinder Yaama (Yaama is an Aboriginal word for welcome) involves five opportunities for students to visit the school and experience the classroom setting. During this time, parents are given opportunities to learn more about education in the twenty-first century and how they can best support this learning and meet new parents.

St Paul's is an integral part of a 'one-stop-shop' for contemporary education in the Gateshead area. With our sister secondary school, St Mary's Catholic College, we provide a seamless K to 12 Catholic education to the families of Gateshead, Mount Hutton, Whitebridge, Redhead, Charlestown and beyond.



WHAT DO PRIMARY STUDENTS LEARN?

THE GOALS

The Board of Studies lists the following as goals for all Kinder to Year 6 schools in New South Wales:

- Provide students with the knowledge and skills they will need to be active and creative participants in the 21st Century.
- Promote equality of education opportunities with special learning requirements.
- Provide excellent education of all young people.
- Provide an education that develops their talents and capacities to full potential.

THE SKILLS

The K-6 curriculum aims to develop in students:

- Basic skills
- A respect for learning.
- Positive attitudes for lifelong education.

The skills include:

- English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
- Numeracy and other mathematical skills.
- Skills in analysis, problem solving, information processing and computing
- Scientific and technological skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious Education in our school has several forms.

- Formal Religious Education lessons
- Prayer life of the school
- Human development and Christian values

Formal Religion lessons are given every day to all grades. The basis of these lessons is the K-12 curriculum developed by the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. This ensures that each child is given an ordered, sequential presentation of the Catholic Faith appropriate to age and grade. The Sacramental program is Parish based.

Parents will be informed as to the relevant changes that have taken place and will be invited to participate in information nights. Parents' participation in the child's sacramental program is mandatory.

At school, children participate in daily prayers. These are said each morning at assembly as well as in classrooms. On special occasions throughout the year we celebrate Mass as a school community. Parents are invited to attend and dates will be advised in the Bulletin.

The children will be given human development lessons across all subject areas. These are given not only in a knowledge/content way, but interwoven with the catholic nature of our school.



SYLLABUS

The NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) has developed syllabi in the six primary Key Learning Areas. These syllabi are general outlines of the teaching framework and give the aims and outcomes to be achieved.

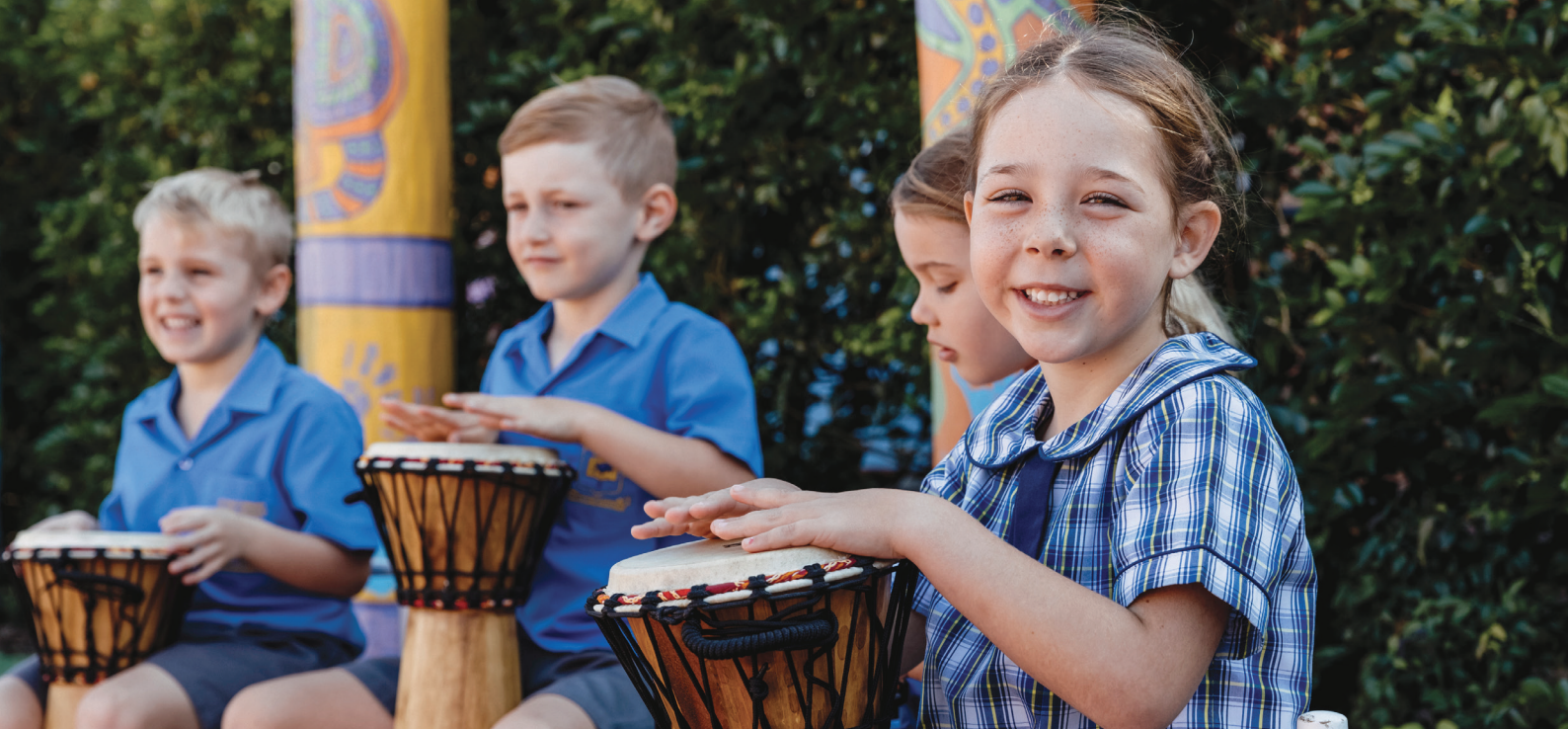
Syllabi are accompanied by support documents. These include:

- Support material to assist teachers in constructing units of work, including sample units
- A guide for parents and the general community giving information and advice concerning the syllabi.

The six Key Learning Areas are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Human Society and its Environment (History & Geography)
- Creative Arts
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.

These Key Learning Areas do not have equal time allocation. The greatest emphasis is given to English and Mathematics. At the same time, primary schools provide children with sufficient learning in each Key Learning Area in every year. As a Catholic school, Religious Education is our seventh Key Learning Area.



MUSIC

A qualified music teacher provides music lessons for all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6. A school choir and band adds to the cultural opportunities available at St Paul's.

READING AT HOME

Parents are encouraged to support their children's reading at home. This is essential for success when learning to read. Home readers are sent home from Kinder to Year 2. If inadvertently a reader goes home that is too difficult for your child, parents should read the book to the child and let the teacher know that the reader was too difficult. Primary children are encouraged to use school and Lake Macquarie library books to practise their reading at home.

COMPUTER BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS

Students and teachers access a number of computer-based learning programs. These programs are available for use at home as well as school. Teachers will send home links and logons as required.

LEARNING CENTRE

St Paul's has a Learning Centre to support the diverse learning needs of our students and is lucky to have a full-time Learning Support Teacher. This teacher works with classroom teachers to develop programs of work in the areas of literacy and numeracy for those children who are experiencing difficulties.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

St Paul's *does not offer traditional homework*. Family lifestyles and family structures have changed considerably over the years.

Australian 7-8 year olds spend an average of 954 hours at school each year. Dr Richard Walker, of the Faculty of Education at the University of Sydney, has written a book about homework from Kinder to Year 12, *Reforming Homework*. Walker's research shows there is no evidence that homework benefits achievement during the early school years. He describes homework of half an hour during these primary years as "excessive". But he says there is evidence supporting the benefits of homework in high school. The strongest argument against homework is that it places stress on children and parents and consumes the time when they should be playing with friends, siblings or parents.

Therefore, there is *no formal written homework from Kinder to Year 4*. Year 5 & 6 are an exception where homework is offered. In preparation for high school, Year 5 & 6 are given set assignments with definite time frames which will be similar to high school expectations. Students will be encouraged to manage both work load and time frame. This homework is not compulsory.

Classes from Kinder to Year 4 are encouraged to participate in suggested activities which include time spent as a family, reading, home projects and computer activities. *Kinder to Year 2 take home 'readers'* to support their reading development. Suggestions for home activities are provided below for students and their families.

At St Paul's home activity focus is on the opportunity to engage in purposeful and reasonable home activities.

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME ACTIVITIES

EARLY STAGE 1

- Daily reading of Home Readers
- Read to your child
- Prepare dinner together – read, measure ingredients etc
- Puzzles e.g. jigsaws
- Play a board game – e.g. Scrabble, Boggle
- Find a Word
- Use construction toys
- Practise address, phone no. emergency procedures etc
- Board Games – e.g. Snakes and Ladders
- Play cards
- Write words and stories
- Visit the local library

STAGE 1

- Daily reading of Home Readers
- Read to your child
- Count Me In Too website – games and activity suggestions
- Get Smart Maths Website
- Scrabble and other family board games
- Assist with writing, reading and compiling weekly shopping list
- Counting – things around the house etc
- Puzzles
- Card games
- Write stories
- Hand eye co-ordination games – e.g. handball
- Create a story book (paper craft)
- Any construction games which require reading instructions e.g. lego
- Visit the local library

STAGE 2

- Practise throwing and catching a ball
- Card games with family members
- Family board games
- Help with cooking dinner
- Writing stories
- Research how to save energy in your home
- Investigate recycling in your home
- Prepare a recipe
- Visit local library
- Reading – alone and to parents
- Practise a musical instrument
- Watch and discuss the news
- Help with the weekly shopping
- Look for specials in brochures and work out how much you would save

STAGE 3

- Practise a musical instrument
- Read
- Research a current event or topic
- Watch and discuss the news
- Watch and discuss the weather report
- Read the newspaper and discuss headlines
- Plant and look after a garden
- Create own games for sharing – e.g. find a word, internet games
- Play board games with your family
- Review shopping brochures – find bargains, determine savings
- Computer activities
- Play a game outside
- Write stories in different text types

SCHOOL INFORMATION

ABSENCES

All absences and partial absences of pupils must be recorded. You are required to notify your child's teacher via the Compass app. Children coming late to school must be signed in by a parent in at the office using the Compass kiosk in the office foyer. Likewise, children leaving early must be signed out by a parent.

If students are absent as a result of a family holiday which is ten school days or longer permission must be obtained from the Principal.

ACCIDENTS

Should an accident occur we would try to do our best to render first aid. If it is thought serious enough you will be contacted on the number you have provided. In the case of an emergency the school will seek immediate medical attention and then inform you. It is the responsibility of parents or guardians to keep the school informed of any changes to phone numbers or other details that may affect the school's ability to make contact in case of emergency. This can be done via the Compass app.

ANNUAL REPORT

An Annual School Report is written and published each year. A copy is available to every family providing details of academic, cultural and sporting achievements of the past year, special celebrations, pastoral care priorities, school achievements, curriculum initiatives and a financial statement summary. A copy is available on the school website.

BICYCLES

Primary children may ride bikes to school providing they are in full roadworthy condition and if it is necessary for them to do so. Given that the school is located on a busy road, if the child is within walking distance or can travel by other means, it is recommended that they do so. Under no circumstances are K-2 children to ride bicycles to school. Children riding bikes must wear an approved helmet and are reminded that the school takes no responsibility for bikes left on the school grounds. Scooters are not a recommended nor safe form of transport.

BOOK CLUB

Periodically throughout the year parents are given the opportunity to buy books suitable to the child's age through a recognised book club. Order forms are sent home and parents must order online. Books are then delivered to school. There is no obligation or pressure on parents to buy these books.

BULLETINS

Fortnightly school bulletins are the usual means of informing parents of what is happening at school. For those who like to keep abreast of everything at school, the bulletins are numbered. A copy is also available in the school webpage <https://www.gatesheadsp.catholic.edu.au/newsletters>. All school bulletins are emailed as well as being available on the Compass app, the school Facebook page, and on the school website.



CANTEEN

The Canteen is operated by an outside contractor, The Right Bite. Days of operation are Thursday and Friday only.

The menu and price list are available at <https://www.gatesheadsp.catholic.edu.au/canteen>.

St Paul's adheres to the Healthy Canteen guidelines developed by the Australian government

VOLUNTEERING

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

Becoming a volunteer

To be able to volunteer within a diocesan school you are required to register online

www.mn.catholic.org.au/people/volunteer/ and complete all necessary checks, inductions

and safeguarding training relevant to your volunteer role. This may mean you will be required to obtain a Working with Children Check and/or National Police Check. All paperwork and checks are to be completed and verified before you can commence in your role. Safeguarding training must occur within six months of your commencement as a volunteer.

The Children and Young Person's (Care and Protection) Act 1998

As a volunteer in the state of NSW you can report certain information to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). You should discuss your concerns with a teacher, assistant principal or principal. You can report your concerns to the DCJ Child Protection Helpline (Ph. 132 111, 24 hrs/7 days) if you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm and your concerns are current. Risk of significant harm may occur from a single act or omission or to a series of acts or omissions.

It is better to be safe than sorry, so if you are uncertain, talk to a staff member at the school.

Part 4 of the Children's Guardian Act Part 4 of the Children's Guardian Act defines diocesan schools as a "schedule 1 entity" and as such we must have systems for preventing, reporting (to the Children's Guardian) and investigating reportable conduct.

All volunteers who hold a Working with Children Check for the purpose of their role within a diocesan school fall within the scope of Part 4 and may be investigated for alleged "reportable conduct", which includes sexual offences, misconduct, assault, ill-treatment, neglect, and behaviour that causes psychological harm to children.

As a volunteer "working" at a diocesan school, any alleged reportable conduct will be investigated. It does not matter if the conduct is alleged to have happened outside school and in your private lives.

The [Office of Safeguarding](#) is the Diocese's specialist safeguarding and child protection service that works with the Children's Guardian to ensure the Diocese meets its obligations under Part 4. As volunteers you should co-operate with any investigation conducted by the Office of Safeguarding.

The Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012

Under this legislation, people who undertake a role in child-related work in a paid or volunteer capacity in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are required by law to have a Working with Children Check Clearance. This "clearance" can be obtained by applying online at [Working with Children Check | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)

Volunteers receive a clearance for free, and it lasts up to five years.

Exemptions apply for volunteers who are a close relative of a student enrolled at the school. There is a "Statutory Screening Selection Tool" included in the online registration process to assist you with this.



Our commitment

As the Bishop of Maitland-Newcastle I expect us all to be attentive to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child and vulnerable person in everything we do in the name of the Church. Each one of us is responsible to ensure we are aware of the signs of abuse, that we know how to respond to a disclosure of abuse and we know how to report our concerns. Most importantly, I require every worker in the Diocese to be prepared, should the situation ever arise, to call out the unsafe or abusive behaviour of colleagues and workmates. The conduct we walk past is the conduct we have condoned.

The Diocese is committed to:

- ▶ Fostering communities of safeguarding, including open and respectful communication about issues of safeguarding with individuals, families and groups
- ▶ Upholding the dignity and rights of all children and vulnerable persons and empowering them to have their voices heard
- ▶ Training all workers in safeguarding knowledge and skills including indicators of abuse, supporting people to disclose abuse and reporting abuse
- ▶ Working closely with statutory authorities to report alleged abuse and support them to investigate those allegations
- ▶ Developing our risk assessment and management systems for all diocesan activities and personnel
- ▶ Developing the breadth and depth of our auditing and compliance regimes
- ▶ Implementing and maintaining compliance with the NSW Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.

“ Pope Francis has called all of us in the Catholic Church “to assume responsibility for preventing cases of abuse and to work for justice and for healing”. I now amplify and specify the Pope’s message. The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle takes a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. Every one of us must each day commit ourselves individually and collectively to safeguard each child and every vulnerable person to whom we minister and interact with.

MOST REV BISHOP MICHAEL KENNEDY

Vicar General & Chancellor
Fr Matthew Muller

Vicar General
Fr Greg Barker

Chief Executive Officer
Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
Sean Scanlon

Chief Operating Officer
Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle
Lisa Tierney

Director
CatholicCare Social Services Hunter-Manning
Gary Christensen

Head of
Catholic Schools
Steven Lemos

Director of
Safeguarding
Sean Tynan

Director
Pastoral Ministries
Teresa Brierley

Executive Director
St Nicholas Early Education
David Healy



SAFEGUARDING IN OUR SCHOOLS

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle represents the Catholic Church in a region extending from Lake Macquarie to Taree and as far inland as Merriwa and Murrurundi. The Diocese supports and oversees almost 60 schools employing thousands of staff, engaging with many thousands of volunteers and educating over 20,000 students.

The schools of Maitland-Newcastle strive to be supportive environments where every student has an opportunity to grow academically, spiritually, physically and emotionally. Catholic schools are committed to being safe places for all children and vulnerable persons. Staff and volunteers undergo the appropriate screening checks, safeguarding training, other induction processes and ongoing formation and training to maximise child safe practices across our schools.

Diocesan schools display safeguarding material, including poster sized commitment statements (set out over the page), child-friendly safeguarding information, contact details for reporting abuse as well as brochures providing specific safeguarding information and guidance.

Many schools in Maitland-Newcastle have one or more dedicated '*promoters of safeguarding*' who support the local school community to address the ongoing issues of compliance to the safeguarding standards set by both Church and the NSW government.

The Office of Safeguarding supports diocesan schools:

- ▶ with the provision of an intake service that analyses concerns for children and vulnerable persons, providing advice and support to school staff and parents, ensuring statutory reporting obligations are met and ensuring appropriate follow up to complaints, when warranted
- ▶ with the provision of direct support and advice to school personnel and the provision of templates, tools and other resources for schools to use to promote compliance with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards and NSW Child Safe Standards
- ▶ by coordinating the diocesan wide *Promoters of Safeguarding* Network for school promoters
- ▶ by providing both face-to-face and online safeguarding training for all school personnel
- ▶ by conducting investigations of school staff who are alleged to have abused a child or vulnerable person, or breached their professional standards
- ▶ by undertaking risk assessments and helping develop risk management plans for individual students or other members of the school community assessed as posing a *real and appreciable risk* to children or vulnerable persons in the school.

CHILD PROTECTION

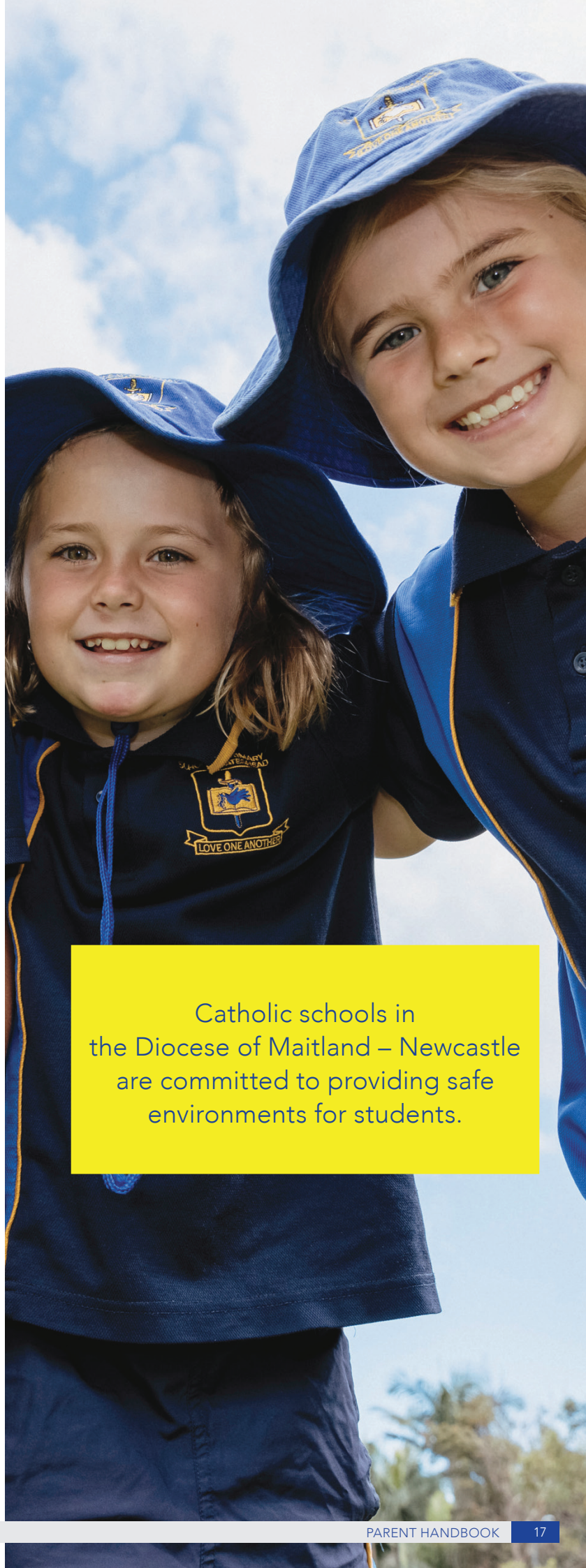
The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an absolute and abiding commitment to promote the safeguarding of children. In 2019, as a part of that commitment, our Bishop, Bill Wright, articulated his expectations of all those who work for the Diocese. "I expect you to place the safety, welfare and wellbeing of every child and vulnerable adult at the centre of everything you do in the name of our Church," he said.

Bishop Wright established the Office of Safeguarding, whose director answers to the Bishop's Office and is charged to oversee the whole of the Diocese's safeguarding of children, including the students in our system of schools.

As a parent sending your child to a diocesan school, you are expected to be an active participant in safeguarding your child's wellbeing. To do so, it's important that you have the best information available to you. The [Office of Safeguarding](#) website offers comprehensive details of the Diocese's approach to safeguarding children. You are also encouraged to be an active participant in the life of your school.

As a parent of a diocesan school student, if you are concerned for:

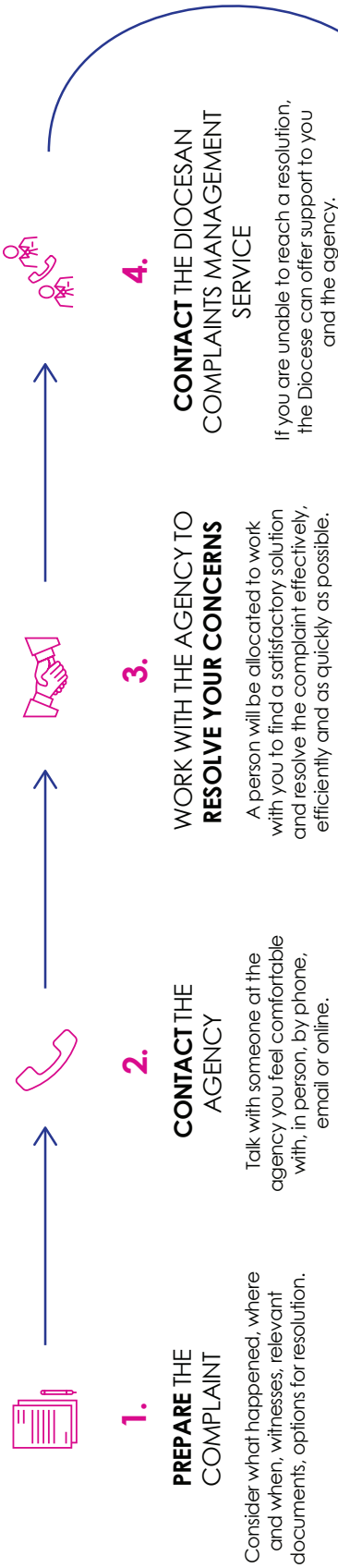
- the safety, welfare or wellbeing of one or more children in the school
- the conduct of a member of staff, a volunteer, contractor or other adult associated with the school
- ... you are able to:
- discuss your concerns with a teacher, assistant principal or principal
- talk to an investigator at the Office of Safeguarding (ph **4979 1390**, during office hours)
- report your concerns to the Department of Communities and Justice's (DCJ) Child Protection Helpline (ph **132 111**, 24 hrs/7 days) if your concerns constitute a risk of significant harm
- report to NSW Police if you believe a crime has been committed.



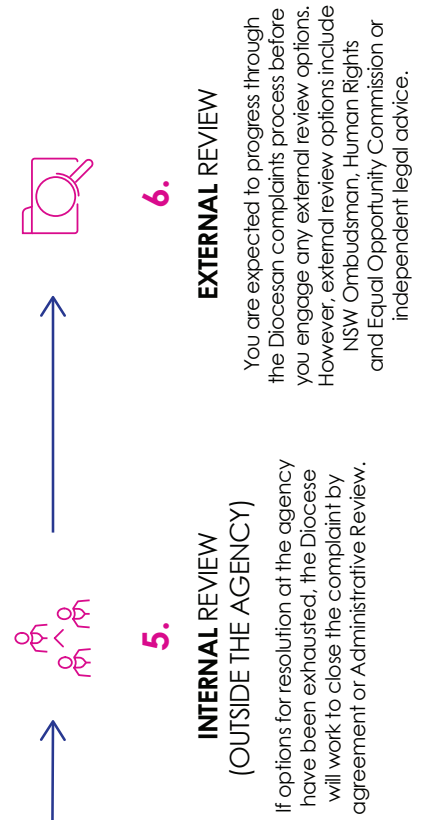
Catholic schools in the Diocese of Maitland – Newcastle are committed to providing safe environments for students.

The Complaint Process

IF YOU HAVE CONCERNS, TALK WITH SOMEONE AT THE AGENCY OR THEIR MANAGER SO THEY CAN RESOLVE IT AT FIRST CONTACT.



Review Options



St Paul's Gateshead is committed to providing a positive, safe environment for all staff and students. There are occasions, however, when members of our schools and wider community are concerned about something happening at school that appears to be unsatisfactory or unreasonable. Please see below our Diocesan complaints process or you can access more information on our school website – [Please provide links](#)

INFORMATION

COUNSELLOR

A school counsellor is available two days per week. The counsellor's role is to assist with any emotional or social issues associated with a student as well as administer cognitive assessments as requested by the school. Confidentiality is assured at all times. Before a child may see the counsellor a Referral Form must be completed by the class teacher and parental consent sought.

DISCIPLINE

The school aims to develop self-discipline and responsible behaviour in each child. Therefore, rules have been formulated that are designed to protect the personal and property rights of each individual. They are not excessively restrictive, nor are they numerous.

Our three rules are:

- Be Respectful
- Be Responsible
- Be a Learner

Each class will be reminded of the basic rules for Christian co-operation and courtesy at the beginning of the school year. We hope the discipline fostered at this school will be building upon the discipline in the home and will be supported by parents.

Should a child be involved in continual misbehaviour, parents will be notified. Should this action fail to curb the inappropriate behaviour you will be asked to attend an interview at school to discuss solutions to the problem. In accordance with the Public Instruction Act (1996) no corporal punishment is permitted to be administered by staff, parents or volunteers.

EMAIL

The school email address is admin@gatesheadsp.catholic.edu.au. If parents wish to email teachers, they can use this email address and the email message will be passed.

ILLNESS

If your child becomes ill at school, the teacher will make a judgement about whether to contact you. We are reluctant to call parents, especially from work, for what appears to be a minor indisposition. However, if the illness persists or seems serious, we will request that you or a person nominated on your child's Compass profile collect the sick child. If your children are ill in the morning, please do not send them to school.

INTERNET

All classes have access to the internet which is a normal part of contemporary learning. The Catholic Schools Office filters our internet access, though this is not perfect as occasionally unsuitable sites slip through. While every effort is made to make internet usage safe, students are trained in correct usage procedures if an unsuitable site pops up. To strive to keep our school incident free, an 'Internet Access Agreement' is signed by student and parent at the commencement of each school year. Failure to keep this agreement will mean suspension of internet.

LIBRARY

The children visit the library on a regular basis for reading and borrowing books. All children are encouraged to have a cloth bag to carry books to and from the library. Books are very costly and we ask that care be taken to see that they are returned in the same condition as when borrowed. Should a book be several weeks overdue or returned damaged, a letter will be sent to you. Your co-operation in acting promptly on the information provided would be appreciated.

MEDICATION

Parents must request and complete a Registration of Administration of Medication Form. Medication will be kept in a locked cupboard. As we are not trained health workers, we shall facilitate the taking of medication, but do not assume full responsibility. No medication can be administered until this documentation is received.

For serious and ongoing illnesses it is expected that Health Care Plans or Critical Care Plans are provided to the school and reviewed annually by the consulting doctor.

If your child has a condition such as asthma or anaphylaxis, the school requires a Medical Action Plan signed by the child's medical practitioner and reviewed annually by the consulting doctor.

MINI VINNIES

St Paul's School community promotes the principles of social justice. Students are taught the importance of giving to others and the relationship between this giving and their own well-being.

To this end Mini Vinnies has been established. This social justice group led by volunteers from our senior classes, plans for events and donations for those less fortunate.



PARKING RULES

The **safety of your children** is our primary concern. All rules must be observed, regardless of the weather or if you are under time constraints.

1. Speed limit at all times is 5kph or less.
2. Drive into the playground and park in marked rows (not in the Staff Parking area).
3. Reverse only when absolutely necessary.
4. Take care not to reverse into walking paths designated by the yellow markers.
5. Do not park alongside the Church. This is a walkway.
6. Leave the car to collect children waiting under the shelter in the afternoon.
7. **Kiss 'n' Drop before school:** If you are only dropping your children off, and not coming into the school itself, then drive in a circuit around the parked cars, stop beside the grassed area in the furthest parking bay, and move on as quickly as possible. There is no parking in these bays in the afternoon.
8. Do not hold up cars behind and never overtake on this loop.
9. You do not have right of way when you leave the school playground. You must give way to all cars, including those coming through the stop sign from the left.
10. The disabled car space must only be used by parents who have a valid Disability Sticker displayed in the front window of the car.

1. The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Catholic Schools Office (CSO), both independently and through its schools, collects personal information, including sensitive information, about students and parents or guardians before and during the course of a student's enrolment at the school. This may be in writing or in the course of conversations. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the school to provide schooling to students enrolled at the school, exercise its duty of care, and perform necessary associated administrative activities, which will enable students to take part in all the activities of the school.
2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the CSO and the school's legal obligations, particularly to enable the CSO and school to discharge its duty of care.
3. Compass is the diocese's centralised digital student information management system and CeD3 is our centralised digital storage system. Compass is owned and operated by a third-party service provider (JDLF International) and CeD3 is owned and operated by the Catholic Education Network (CENet). The personal information in the system is accessible by:
 - ▶ Compass, for the purpose of providing technical support; and
 - ▶ CENet, to provide support to the diocese. CENet has access to the personal information from Compass when it is held in CeD3 as well as information collected from other sources and held in CeD3.
4. Laws governing or relating to the operation of a school require that certain information is collected. These include: Education Act 1990 (NSW), Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW) and Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW).
5. Health information about students is sensitive information within the terms of the Australian Privacy Principles (APPs) under the Privacy Act 1988. We may ask you to provide medical reports about students from time to time.
5. If we do not obtain the information referred to above we may not be able to enrol or continue the enrolment of your son/ daughter.
6. The CSO and school from time to time discloses personal and sensitive information to others for administrative, educational and support purposes. This may include to:
 - ▶ other schools and teachers at those schools
 - ▶ government departments
 - ▶ Catholic Schools NSW, the school's local diocese and the parish, other related church agencies/entities, and schools within other dioceses
 - ▶ medical practitioners
 - ▶ people providing educational, support and health services to the school, including specialist visiting teachers, sport coaches, volunteers, counsellors
 - ▶ providers of learning and assessment tools
 - ▶ assessment and educational authorities, including the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), NSW Education Standards Authority, and NAPLAN Test Administration Authorities (who will disclose it to the entity that manages the online platform for NAPLAN).
7. Personal information collected from students is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians.
8. The CSO and school may use online or 'cloud' service providers to store personal information and to provide services to the school that involve the use of personal information, such as services relating to email, instant messaging and education and assessment applications. Some limited personal information may also be provided to these service providers to enable them to authenticate users that access their services. This personal information may reside on a cloud service provider's servers which may be situated outside Australia. Further information about the school's use of online or 'cloud' service providers is contained in the CSO's Privacy Policy.
9. The CSO's Privacy Policy, accessible on the CSO website, sets out how parents or students may seek access to and correction of their personal information which the school has collected and holds. However, access may be refused in certain circumstances such as where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the CSO or school's duty of care to the student, or where students have provided information in confidence. Any refusal will be notified in writing with reasons if appropriate.
10. The CSO's Privacy Policy also sets out how parents and students can make a complaint about a breach of the APPs and how the complaint will be handled.
11. The school may engage in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. It may also be disclosed to organisations that assist in the school's fundraising activities solely for that purpose. We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.
12. On occasions information such as academic and sporting achievements, student activities and similar news is published in school newsletters and magazines, on our intranet and on our website. This may include photographs and videos of student activities such as sporting events, school camps and school excursions. The school will obtain permissions annually from the student's parent or guardian (and from the student if appropriate) if we would like to include such photographs or videos or other identifying material in our promotional material or otherwise make this material available to the public such as on the internet.
13. If you provide the CSO or school with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information and why.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

It is important for parents and teachers to consult regularly, at times that are convenient for you both. You have a great deal of knowledge that will help the teacher to understand your child better. The teacher, an experienced and qualified person, will be able to explain to you your child's strengths and areas that need special assistance in the classroom. By developing mutual interest and concern, the child will benefit.

Assessment tasks will be set by the classroom teacher and will relate directly to the planned teaching program. Assessment will be ongoing throughout the school year.

The school reports on a more formal basis to parents throughout the year. Written school reports will be provided to parents twice a year, at the end of Terms 2 and 4. Reports are published on Compass. All parents are required to attend a Parent Teacher interview in Term 1 and at the beginning of Term 3. Other opportunities are also provided for parent/teacher interviews after reports are sent home at the end of the year. Parents are encouraged to request interviews at any other time during the year as necessary.

Students in Years 3 & 5 will also receive a report on their child's performance in literacy and numeracy following the NAPLAN testing.

SCHOOL PHONE APP

St Paul's have a Compass school app which works efficiently on both smart phones and smart devices such as iPads and Android tablets. Compass is also available on laptops and desktop computers.

Parents are must use this app to let the school know if your child is ill and will be absent from school. School events, bulletins and important notifications are all sent to parents via this app. Reminders of upcoming events, in particular, are beneficial to parents. Permission for all excursions must be given on the Compass app.

To access Compass, go into your App Store, type in St Paul's Gateshead Compass and install as directed. Contact the school office for your logon and password.

STAFF IN-SERVICE DAYS

The staff of the school is entitled to seven pupil-free days each year. Two are at the beginning of the year before the children start school and two at the end of the year after the children finish. The other three are during the year. The in-service days are used to develop school-based curricula or for professional learning. These days are communicated at least one month in advance to parents in the school Bulletin. Even though these days can be inconvenient if both parents work, they are invaluable for teachers' on-going professional learning. St Nicholas OOSH onsite is always available on these days.

SCHOOL DAY

The school assembles at 8.45am and concludes at 2.45pm. The playground is unsupervised before 8.20am and after 3.00pm. Your child, for his or her safety, should not be in the playground outside these hours unless previous arrangements have been made.

TRANSPORT

Eligibility for a free Government bus Opal Card is determined using a 1.6km distance qualification measured on a radius from the centre of the school site, rather than by the nearest practicable walking route. The only exception is in respect of K-2 pupils who are eligible irrespective of the distance from home to school and those pupils who live within the 1.6km radius but who are required to walk more than 2.3km because of the nature of the street system or the terrain. To apply go to <https://www.opal.com.au/en/about-opal/opal-for-school-students/>. Parents no longer need to reapply once your child goes to Year 3. For more information or to report a lost School Opal card phone 131500 or go to the website.

PB4L (POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR for LEARNING)

Positive Behaviour for Learning is a framework to promote and maximize academic achievement and behavioural competence. It is a school wide strategy for helping all students achieve important social and learning goals. We know that when good behaviour and good teaching come together, our students will succeed in learning.



As part of our PB4L program, we have established several clear rules for the behaviours we expect in all areas of our school. These are: We Are Responsible, We Are Respectful and We Are Learners. We will explicitly teach these expectations to students and reward them frequently for their great behaviours. The expectations for all student behavior will be clear throughout our school.

The development of these skills will provide for a safer school environment and give more time for learning. By detailing every expected behaviour and teaching it to the children in a positive way, we are providing a common language for everyone in our school community.

We believe that by helping students practise good behavior, we will build a school community where all students have an environment where they can succeed and grow.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

SUMMER

GIRLS

Dress	-	Blue checked with yellow trim Tab trim No. 559 with blue cotton
	or	
Shirt	-	Blue (with school crest)
Shorts /Culottes	-	Blue cotton
Shoes	-	Black 'polishable' school shoes
Socks	-	White – no anklets
Hat	-	Royal blue school hat

BOYS

Shirt	-	Blue (with school crest)
Shorts	-	Grey cotton – (not corduroy or cargo shorts)
Shoes	-	Black 'polishable' school shoes
Socks	-	Short grey with blue and gold stripes

WINTER

GIRLS

Tunic	-	Navy (box pleated with navy tights) OR Navy slacks (with white socks)
Blouse	-	Long Sleeve Blue (with school crest)
Shoes	-	Black 'polishable' school shoes
Tie	-	Blue with gold and white stripes
Jacket	-	School Jacket

BOYS

Shirt	-	Long Sleeve Blue (with school crest)
Pants	-	Long Grey trousers (Blocker style)
Shoes	-	Black 'polishable' school shoes
Tie	-	Blue with gold and white stripes
Jacket	-	School Jacket

SPORTS UNIFORM

GIRLS	Shorts	-	School sports shorts
	Skirt & brief	-	Royal blue
	Polo shirt	-	School polo shirt
	Long Pants	-	School Tracksuit Pants (unisex)
	Shoes	-	Joggers
BOYS	Shorts	-	School sports shorts
	Polo shirt	-	School polo shirt
	Long Pants	-	School Tracksuit Pants (unisex)
	Shoes	-	Joggers

All uniforms are available from Lowes at Charlestown.

A "NO HAT, NO PLAY" RULE IS PART OF OUR UNIFORM POLICY

The school has a collection of used school uniforms that it gives to needy families for a small donation. Sr Pat is the contact for this.

The change from summer to winter and vice versa is notified in the Bulletin. The general rule is:-

Summer Uniform: Term 1 to Term 2, Week 4

Winter Uniform: Term 2, Week 4 (mid May) to the end of Term 3

Summer Uniform: Term 4

However, this may vary from year to year depending on seasonal changes.

St Paul's has a strict uniform policy. Correct footwear, as well as uniform must be worn at all times. Students are asked not to wear items of jewellery, other than a watch or one set of plain sleeper or stud earrings.

- Hair ribbons are to be gold or navy in colour.
- Hair below the shoulder must be tied back.
- Hair must be the child's natural colour and extreme styles must be avoided.
- Your support and cooperation ensures the effective implementation of the uniform policy.

SCHOOL FEES

The School Fees are the parents' contribution towards the recurrent cost of educating their child in a Catholic School. Other and larger contributions are made by the Commonwealth Government and the New South Wales Government. These contributions, the Commonwealth General Recurrent Grant and the State Per Capita Grant, are forwarded directly to the Catholic Schools Office and are used in the payment of staff.

Of the school fee actually collected, a percentage is remitted to the Catholic Schools Office as a contribution to the recurrent cost of the whole system. The balance of the school fees collected is the school's major source of income for its own recurrent operations.

In the case of unusual hardship, the principal has authority to grant concessions beyond those built into the scale.

The following should also be noted in relation to fees:

- The Catholic school runs at a managed resource level, which endeavours to balance the need for excellence in educational opportunity with the ability of the Catholic community to pay.
- Commonwealth and State Government contributions, while substantial, do not cover the total cost of running the school.
- The seriousness with which parents take their responsibility for meeting fees and the sacrifices that they make in the process, are appreciated.
- It is a matter of justice to all parents that each family undertakes their responsibility for making fee payments.
- Where pressing financial circumstances make it impossible to meet full fees, parents are to contact the principal for an interview to make a specific arrangement for a concession.

FEE SCHEDULE 2024

2024 TUITION FEE

Primary Schools Tuition Fee

Per Year	\$1,487.00
Per Term (4 Terms)	\$371.75
Per Week (52 Weeks)	\$28.60

Family discount for each child off the Diocesan Tuition fee full rate is:

- **1 child family** **0% - full rate to be applied**
- **2 child family** **15% each child**
- **3 child family** **25% each child**
- **4 child family** **50% each child**

RESOURCE FEE

The school sets the Resource Fee. This fee covers stationery, copying and excursions. The fee provides the school with an income to supply the children with the necessities for normal school learning. Items include pencils, pens, rulers, exercise and some textbooks, art supplies and photocopying costs. By bulk purchasing such items the school gains a discount, which is beneficial to parents.

The Resource Fee includes all excursions throughout the year, including swimming and athletics carnivals, cultural incursions and excursions, an experience of live theatre.

The Resource Fee in 2024 is \$540 per year. This fee must be paid up to date so children can attend excursions.

Year 2 Swimming, Year 5 Camp and Year 6 Canberra Trip are not included in the Resource Fee. In 2024, Year 2 Swimming was \$150 for the 10-day program, Year 5 Camp to the Great Aussie Bush Camp at Tea Gardens was \$385 for three days/two nights and the Year 6 Canberra Trip was \$385 for three days/two nights. In 2025 these excursions should be similar prices with slight increases for inflation.

BUILDING LEVY

The 2024 Diocesan Family School Building Levy is \$1638.00 per family per year and collected at the same interval as school fees. This fee is a family rate regardless of the number of enrolled students in the family or the number of systemic schools attended.

If families are struggling with fees, they should make an appointment to meet with the principal to determine a payment plan. No child shall miss out on a Catholic education if they cannot pay full fees.



VISITORS' PROTOCOL

All visitors to the school are asked to comply with the following procedures:-

1. Report to the school office to inform the secretary of your presence in the school.
2. Sign in on Compass clearly stating your name, date and time of arrival and the purpose of your visit or the company you represent.
3. Please wear a visitor's sticker for the duration of your stay.
4. On leaving the premises sign out on Compass.
5. There may be times when the Principal, staff members, office or classroom access are unavailable. Please make an appointment to avoid disappointment.
6. All children arriving late or leaving early MUST be signed in or out using Compass located in the front office.
7. If collecting your child early please inform the school secretary so she can call the classroom to have your child sent up. DO NOT go to the classrooms to collect your child as this is disruptive to the rest of the class.

WEBSITE

The school's website address is <http://gatesheadsp.catholic.edu.au>

The website contains the school Bulletin, which includes calendar dates, as well as a number of relevant school policies. Information is updated regularly for your convenience.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY (WHS)

St Paul's Primary School has nominated a Workplace Safety Representative who monitors and manages the school site to make every effort to ensure the safety and welfare of students, staff, parents, volunteers and visitors.

WHS is an item on each staff meeting agenda, allowing all staff members to contribute.

Regular inspection and maintenance of playground areas and buildings are carried out. If you see something in our school that is unsafe, please inform the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures are clearly displayed in all buildings.

Evacuation and Lock Down procedures are drilled regularly.



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