



NEWSLETTER

Dear Families,

It has been fantastic to see so many families involved in our school community already this year. The Opening School Year Mass, Parent Teacher meetings, and Foundation Parent Literacy Information sessions at school have all been well attended. These events allow all of us to make new acquaintances and to re-connect with others. Parent involvement plays a vital role in the success of any school, and we are blessed, as a school, to have such a vibrant and supportive parent community helping us all to live, learn and thrive.



STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT – FLARE LITERACY STRATEGY

Today our staff are undertaking their first day of professional learning with the FLARE Literacy Strategy. Our school has joined all Catholic Primary Schools across the Ballarat Diocese looking into literacy practices and approaches that best support the growth of our students. The DOBCEL Flare Literacy Strategy has been implemented in Ballarat and is an approach to literacy instruction that applies a systematic, cumulative, explicit and diagnostic methodology to teaching phonology (the system of sounds within our language), sound-symbol relationships, syllables, morphology (the study of words and their parts), syntax (the arrangement of words within sentences) and semantics (the study of meaning in language) from Foundation to Year 6.



PARISH RECONCILIATION SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The Sacrament of Reconciliation Parent Information meetings will be held here at St Thomas More School on **Tuesday 18th February** at **9am** and at St Patrick’s Cathedral, in the Glowery/ MacKillop Rooms at **5.30pm** on **Thursday 20th February**. In the Ballarat diocese, children who are: in Year 4 and above, are baptised Catholic and have completed the Sacrament of Confirmation, are eligible to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. If you have any questions, please refer them to Mr Tony Beggs at the Cathedral Office on 53312933 from Tuesday to Friday weekly, between 10:00am - 3:00pm. Tony can also be contacted by email: ballarat@ballarat.catholic.org.au. To enrol your child in the program please click the link <https://forms.gle/NLSD9VUGeubBkkp77>.



BABY NEWS

It is with much joy and delight that Jenna, Trav and Charlie Hoyle welcomed the safe arrival of Lucy Quinn Hoyle on February 6th weighing 3.3kg. We wish them much happiness as a family of four and look forward to seeing Lucy live, learn and thrive.



YEARS 3-6 ATHLETICS DAY DETAILS

Our Year 3 – 6 students Athletics Carnival will be held this **Friday 14th February**. Students will arrive at school and be bused to and from Llanberris Athletics Reserve. See the program below. (Please note that the Foundation/ Years 1 and 2 Athletics Carnival will be held at school on **Friday 28th March**).

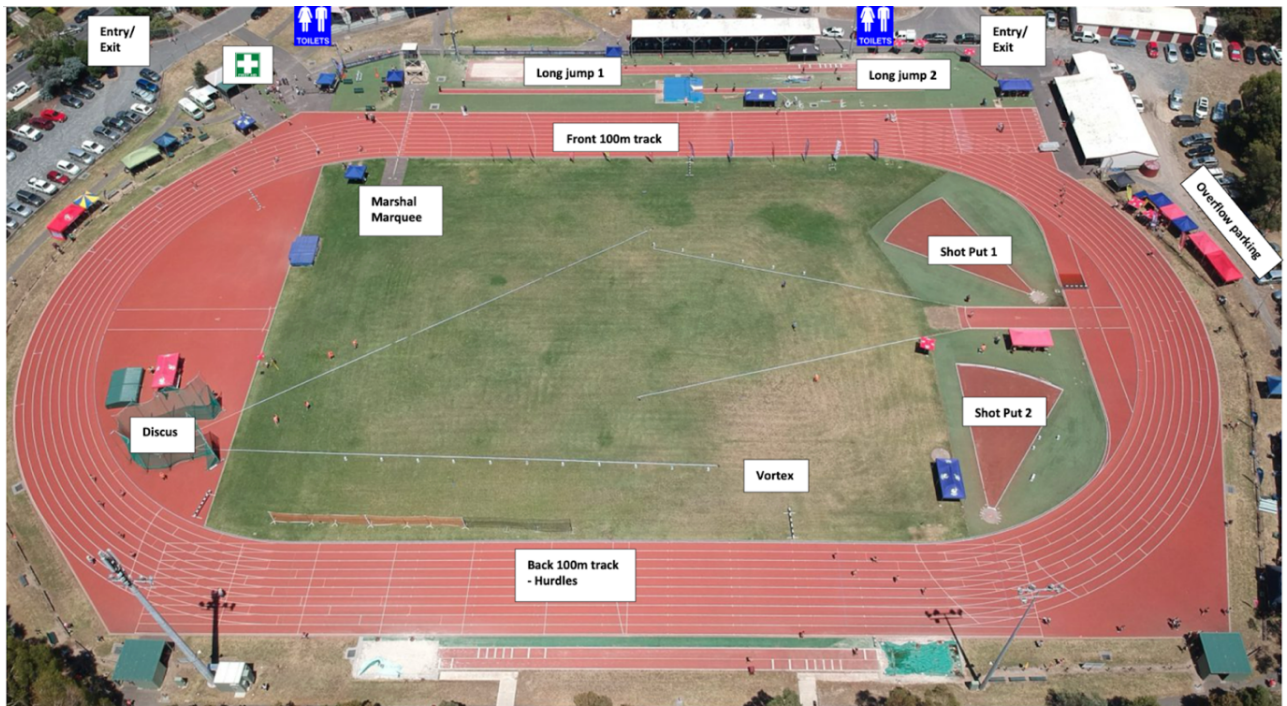
Year 3 - 6 Athletics day program 2025 Friday 14th February 2025

9.45am: Arrival and assemble into class groups.

9:45 - 10am: Welcome and then move to rotations for the day, ready to begin at 10am.

Each age group will move around in the same group for all rotations.

Age Group	9:45am	10am - 10:25am	10:25- 10:50am	10:50am- 11:15am	11:15am- 11:40am	11:40am- 12:05pm	12:05- 12:20pm	12:20-12:45pm	12:45 - 1:10pm	1:10 - 1:35pm	1:35 - 2:00pm
12/13 Boys	800m	Hurdles	Vortex	200m	Discus	Lunch	Sprints Front 100m	Long Jump	Shot Put	Relays	Awards and winners announced
12/13 Girls		Shot Put	Hurdles	Vortex	200m		Discus	Sprints Front 100m	Long Jump	Relays	
11 Boys		Long Jump	Shot Put	Hurdles	Vortex		200m	Discus	Sprints Front 100m	Relays	
11 Girls		Sprints Front 100m	Long Jump	Shot Put	Hurdles		Vortex	200m	Discus	Relays	
9/10 Boys		Discus	Sprints Front 100m	Long Jump	Shot Put		Hurdles	Vortex	200m	Relays	
9/10 Girls		200m	Discus	Sprints Front 100m	Long Jump		Shot Put	Hurdles	Vortex	Relays	



Site map of Llanberris Athletics Reserve.

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The St Thomas More School Catholic Primary School Advisory Council (SAC) meets throughout the school year. "The SAC is the leading advisory group for the Principal, as an active forum for parent and community participation, providing support and advice in strategic planning, school improvement, educational outcomes and stewardship of resources". (Diocese of Ballarat Catholic Education Limited - DOBCEL). The 2025 SAC is made up of the following members: Parish Priest—Fr. Ed Maloney, Principal: Simon Duffy, Deputy Principal: Trish Caldwell, Religious Education Leader: Dympna Turner and parent representatives: Clare Hogan, Jacklyn Mason, Adrian Misseri, Jeevan Pinto, Brenton Riordan, Jessica Sewell and Ben Wilkie. I would like to thank the SAC members for the fantastic work that they do in guiding and assisting our St. Thomas More Catholic Primary School community. The next SAC meeting is on **Monday 24th February at 5pm.**

FOUNDATION (PREP) 2026

All Ballarat Catholic Primary Schools have begun the 2026 Foundation (Prep) enrolment process. Please see details attached below regarding this process. Please note that current families will also need to complete the enrolment process, even if they have siblings currently attending the school.

WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

Workplace safety is everybody's responsibility. We have a Work Health and Safety team that meet regularly. If you have any school health or safety concerns that you would like to raise with the committee, please contact either Mrs Fran Dunn, our school's Work Health Safety Co-Ordinator, or myself.

FAMILY ASSISTANCE SCHEME, CAMP, SPORT AND EXCURSION FUND (CSEF) REBATES AND SCHOOL SAVER BONUS 2025

For those families who are current holders of a valid Health Care Card there are three rebates available to assist families with school fees. The Family Fee Assistance Scheme is offered by the Diocese of Ballarat, the Camps, Sports and Excursion Funds (CSEF) rebate is offered by the State Government along with the School Saver Bonus. Families who are eligible are asked to complete the attached forms, accompanied by a copy of their current Health Care Card and return them to the school office before the end of Term 1. The application forms are available from the office and are also attached to the end of today's newsletter for your convenience.

School TV Week 3, 2025: FRIENDSHIP & BELONGING

Here is the link to the **Friendship & Belonging**: [Friendship & Belonging](#)

'Learning how to make new friends and keep them involves several skills every young person needs to understand and develop. For some these skills will come very naturally, allowing them to easily move between different

friendship groups, sharing their experiences and opening up to new people. For others, this can be much harder to navigate. Belonging to a group that is like-minded with similar interests is highly beneficial to a young person's wellbeing. It gives them a sense of security thereby helping them to feel valued which in turn builds their confidence.

Positive friendships are an important part of the journey to adulthood. Adult carers can support their child or teenager by providing guidance in the many social and emotional skills required for a healthy relationship. This will help them to obtain, retain and maintain friendships. However, not all friendships are regarded as positive. Sometimes young people develop negative or toxic friendships. Therefore, it is also important for them to learn how to identify, avoid or deal with such a friendship.

In this edition of SchoolTV, adult carers can learn how to support their young person's friendship so that they experience a sense of belonging.' (SchoolTV, 2025)



FOUNDATION – YEAR 2 NEW CLASSROOM HELPERS

Helping in a junior classroom is such a fantastic and rewarding opportunity where helpers get to see how their child learns and ways they might support them at home. In addition to parents, we welcome grandparents or special friends to become helpers as well. All 'helpers' need to complete the informative training course held over two sessions. The location of these sessions will be advised as you arrive at school for the course.

Session 1: Monday 24th March 9:00-11am

Session 2: Monday 31st March 9:00-11am

If you would like to participate in this course, please complete the Google form by clicking on the link below:

[2025 New Classroom Helpers Registration Form](#)

To be a volunteer at our school you will need:

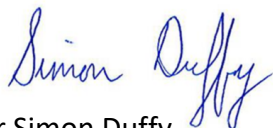
- a current 'Working with Children' check which you can apply for online.
- to complete an induction process online that can be found on our website under 'Volunteers'.
- to read, sign and return to the school office, the DOBCEL Child Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct policy that is also available on our website.

FOUNDATION – YEAR 2 Trained Classroom Helpers

We will resume having volunteers in our junior classes from the start of Term 2. If you would like to assist, and have previously undertaken the course, please email Jo Wheelahan with a preference of days of the week and frequency (weekly or fortnightly), and your child's name and classroom teacher jwheelahan@stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au

I look forward to a great year working alongside all the members in our school community.

May God bless you all and keep you safe,



Mr Simon Duffy
Principal

Term 1 Calendar, 2025

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
3 Feb	10 Parent/Teacher Meetings 2.30 – 5:30pm	11 Parent/Teacher Meetings 2.30 – 5:30pm	12 School Closure Day - Pupil-free day. Staff professional development	13	14 School Athletics Day For Years 3-6 students held at Llanberris Athletics Reserve
4 Feb	17	18	19 Foundation students - Rest Day	20	21
5 March	24 School Advisory Council Meeting 5:00pm	25	26 Foundation students - Rest Day	27	28
6 March	3	4 Shrove Tuesday	5 Ash Wednesday Foundation students - Rest Day	6	7
7 March	10 Public Holiday - Labour Day	11	12 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	13 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	14 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5
8 March	17 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	18 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5	19 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5 Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00	20 NAPLAN Assessments Yr. 3 and 5 Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00	21
9 March/ April	24 Classroom Helper Training session 9-11am (Part 1)	25 Foundation 2026- Parent Information Session & Tour 9:15-10:00	26	27 School Photos	28 Junior School Athletics Carnival for Years F- 2 students to be held at school
10	31 Classroom Helper Training session 9-11am (Part 2)	1	2	3	4 Last day of Term 1 1.45pm dismissal



Enrolment Information for Prospective 2026 Foundation (Prep) Students

at Catholic Primary Schools in the City of Ballarat

A single enrolment application process is in place for all families seeking Foundation (Prep) enrolment for the 2026 school year at a Catholic primary school within the City of Ballarat (see school list contained in this document), including families with children already in one of the eleven schools. Note that information collected through the enrolment process is collated on a common database shared by the eleven schools.

Families seeking enrolment should follow the steps below to apply by **Thursday 22 May 2025**.

Application Process

1. Contact/visit the website of the school/s you are interested in enrolling your child at – see school list.
2. Engage with the school's process for conducting information sessions or school tours
3. Complete the online Expression of Interest - Application for Enrolment form by 4.00pm on Thursday 22 May 2025 by visiting the [DOBCEL website](#) (click link). Note that this link will not be live until Monday 10 February 2025 at 9.00am.

Important:

- You will be asked to indicate your first, second and third preference schools.
- You will be required to upload your child's Birth Certificate and Baptism Certificate (if applicable).
- If you are unable to access the online form, contact Danielle at enrollments@dobcel.catholic.edu.au for assistance. Your query will be attended to as soon as possible.

Key 2025 Dates

Foundation (Prep) enrolment applications open	Monday 10 February at 9.00am
Expression of interest period closes	Thursday 22 May at 4.00pm
School principals meet to determine allocation of placements	Wednesday 4 June
Placement offers sent	Friday 13 June at 12.00pm
List of schools with vacancies published	Friday 13 June at 12.00pm
Placement acceptance closes	Friday 20 June at 4.00pm

Important:

- Each Catholic Primary School will make offers of enrolment in line with the [Diocese of Ballarat Enrolment Policy](#) which takes into consideration a variety of factors.
- Completing this expression of interest process does not guarantee an offer of enrolment in a City of Ballarat Catholic primary school.

Catholic Primary Schools

St Thomas More Primary School

Location: 100 Cuthberts Road, Alfredton
Website: www.stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 2244

St Patrick's Parish Primary School

Location: 119 Drummond St South, Ballarat
Website: www.spballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5332 7680

St Alipius Parish Primary School

Location: 106-108 Victoria St, Ballarat East
Website: www.saballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5331 1816

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Location: 100 Fortune Street, Ballarat East
Website: www.sfxballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5331 6311

St Columba's Primary School

Location: 306 Howard Street, Ballarat North
Website: www.scballarat.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5332 4894

Lumen Christi Primary School

Location: 111 Whitelaw Avenue, Delacombe
Website: www.lcdelacombe.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5336 2015

Please apply to these schools directly

St Mary's Primary School

Location: 131 Powells Road, Clarkes Hill
Website: www.smclarkeshill.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 5280

St Patrick's Primary School

Location: 1564 Old Melbourne Road, Gordon
Website: www.spgordon.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5368 9495

St Michael's Primary School

Location: 29 Smith Street, Daylesford
Website: www.smdaylesford.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5348 1261

Siena Catholic Primary School

Location: 150 Eleanor Drive, Lucas
Website: www.slucas.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5334 3906

Emmaus Catholic Primary School

Location: 1503 Geelong Road, Mt Clear
Website: www.emtclear.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5330 2266

St Aloysius Primary School

Location: 800 Ripon Street South, Redan
Website: www.saredan.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5335 8177

St James' Primary School

Location: 260 Albert Street, Sebastopol
Website: www.sjsebastopol.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5335 8750

Our Lady Help of Christians Primary School

Location: 480A Gillies Street, Wendouree
Website: www.olhcwendouree.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5339 4726

St Brigid's Primary School

Location: 98 Inglis Street, Ballan
Website: www.sballan.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5368 1015

St Augustine's Primary School

Location: 125 Napier Street, Creswick
Website: www.sacreswick.catholic.edu.au
Phone: 5345 2106

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund APPLICATION Form

School Name

School REF ID

Parent/legal guardian details

Surname _____

First name _____

Address _____

Town/suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____

Contact number _____

Centrelink pensioner concession **OR** Health care card number (CRN)

- - - **OR**

Foster parent* **OR** Veterans affairs pensioner (Gold Card)**

*Foster Parents must provide a copy of the temporary care order letter from the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

**Applicants must provide a copy of the Veteran Affairs Gold card.

Student details

Child's surname	Child's first name	Student ID	Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)	Year level

I authorise the Victorian Department of Education (DE) to use Centrelink Confirmation eServices to perform an enquiry about my Centrelink customer details and concession card status to enable the business to determine if I qualify for a concession, rebate or service. I also authorise the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) to provide the results of any enquiry to DE regarding temporary care orders.

I understand that:

- DFFH or Centrelink will use information I have provided to DE to confirm my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund and will disclose to DE personal information including my name, address, payment and concession card type and status.
- This consent, once signed, remains valid while my child is enrolled at a registered Victorian school unless I withdraw it by contacting the school.
- I can obtain proof of my circumstances/details from DFFH and provide it to my child's school so that my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund can be determined.
- If I withdraw my consent or do not alternatively provide proof of my circumstances/details, I may not be eligible for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund provided by DE.
- Information regarding my eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund may be disclosed to DFFH and/or State Schools Relief for the purpose of evaluating concession card services or confirming eligibility for assistance.

You can request access to the personal information that we hold about you, and to request that any errors be corrected, by contacting your child's school.

Signature of applicant _____ **Date** ____ / ____ / ____

Camps, Sports and Excursions fund eligibility

Below are the criteria used to determine a student's eligibility for the Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF).

Criteria 1 – Eligibility

To be eligible* for the fund, a mature minor of sixteen years of age or over, a parent or legal guardian of a student attending a registered Government or non-government Victorian primary or secondary school must:

- on the first day of Term one; or
 - on the first day of Term two.
- a) Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the State Concessions Act 2004, that is, be a holder of Veterans Affairs Gold Card or be an eligible Centrelink Health Care Card (HCC) or Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) holder; or
 - b) Be a temporary foster parent; and
 - c) Submit an application to the school by the due date.

* A special consideration eligibility category also exists. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Eligibility | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef/eligibility)

Mature minors or parents who receive a Carer Allowance on behalf of a child, or any other benefit or allowance not income tested by Centrelink, are not eligible for the CSEF unless they also comply with one of (a) or (b) above.

Criteria 2 - Be of school age and attend school in Victoria

School is compulsory for all Victorian children aged between six and seventeen years of age inclusive.

For the purposes of CSEF, students may be eligible for assistance if they attend a Victorian registered primary or secondary school. Typically, these students are aged between five and eighteen years inclusive.

CSEF is not payable to students' attending pre-school, kindergarten, home schooling, or TAFE.

Eligibility Date

For concession card holders, CSEF eligibility will be subject to the parent/legal guardian's concession card being successfully validated with Centrelink (see [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef/policy)).

Payment amounts

CSEF payment amount

The CSEF is an annual payment to the school to be used towards camps, sports and/or excursion expenses for the benefit of the eligible student.

The CSEF is paid directly the school and will be allocated by the school towards camps, sports and/or excursion costs for your child. Please refer to the policy for the current rates.

For ungraded students, the rate payable is determined by the student's date of birth. For more information, see: [Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\): Payment amounts | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund/csef/payment-amounts)

Foundation and Year 7 government school students who are CSEF recipients are also eligible for a uniform voucher. Schools are required to make applications on behalf of parents, so please register your interest at the school.

How to complete the application form

NOTE: ALL SECTIONS MUST BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN

1. Complete the PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN DETAILS section.
Make sure that the Surname, First Name, and Customer Reference Number (CRN) details match those on your concession card. You will also need to provide your concession card to the school.
If you are claiming as a Foster Parent or a Veteran Affairs Pensioner, you will need to provide a copy of documentation confirming your status as a temporary Foster Parent or provide your Veterans Affairs Pensioner Gold card to the school.
2. Complete the STUDENT/S DETAILS section for students at this school.
3. Sign and date the form and return it to the school office as soon as possible.

CSEF payments cannot be claimed retrospectively for prior years.

Queries relating to CSEF eligibility and payments should be directed to the school.

COMMUNITY NOTICES & EVENTS



**Enrolments for
2026**

CLOSE 7 February, 2025

Character, Compassion, Community



2026 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Encouraging and recognising the pursuit of excellence in all areas of school life, St Patrick's College is offering scholarships to students entering Years 7, 10 & 11 in 2026 in the following categories:

- ✓ Academic Excellence
- ✓ General Excellence/Leadership
- ✓ Performing Arts (Music & Drama)
- ✓ Sport

APPLY NOW

DAMASCUS IN TOUCH

TERM 1 – February 2025

For Year 7 2026 Commencement

Open Morning

**ATTENTION GRADE 6 2025
STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

If you are interested in learning more about Damascus College and have a child in Grade 6, then don't miss the opportunity to attend the last Open Morning event at Damascus College.

Open Morning

Wednesday 5 February, 9am – 11am

The Feb Open Morning event provides an opportunity for prospective families to take a guided tour of the College led by staff, and is an opportunity to experience Damascus during school hours. Open Mornings commence at 9am and conclude at 11am with light refreshments.

REGISTER YOUR ATTENDANCE NOW AT
<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/enrolment/visit-us>

**Please note that Year 7 2026 Enrolments
close on Thursday 6 February**



Bright Futures Scholarship – closing soon!

For Year 7 2026 commencement

The Bright Futures Scholarship is currently open to Grade 6 2025 families and **closes soon on Thursday 6 February 2025.**

This scholarship is for the purpose of supporting students and families who are experiencing financial or personal disadvantage, and who demonstrate a strong commitment to social justice activities and contribute to their local community but may not otherwise be able to afford a Catholic education.

This scholarship is awarded annually to one incoming Year 7 2026 student for **50% tuition relief** and is awarded for the duration of a student's enrolment at Damascus College (maximum of 6 years).

To be considered for this scholarship, applicants must be seeking to attend Damascus for Year 7 2026. Applicants must also have submitted an Enrolment Application Form to Damascus College by the advertised deadline, and applicants are selected based on the selection criteria on the website.

Further info on the scholarship and to download the application form, go to:

<https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au/enrolment/scholarships>



**BE
MY
BEST**

[damascus.vic.edu.au](https://www.damascus.vic.edu.au)

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School ~ Cnr Cuthberts Rd & Elaine Ave, Alfredton 3350.

P: 03 5334 2244 E: admin@stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au I: www.stmalfredton.catholic.edu.au ABN: 77 131 997 830