



ST THERESE'S

PRIMARY SCHOOL NEW LAMBTON

PARENT HANDBOOK 2026



TO BRING CHRIST AND HIS MESSAGE, IN ALL
ITS RICHNESS, INTO THE HEARTS AND LIVES OF ALL.



COMMENCEMENT DATES 2026

Staff

Tuesday, 27 January – Friday, 30 January

Years 1-6

Monday, 2 February

Kindergarten

Wednesday, 4 February

2026 NSW SCHOOL TERMS

Term 1

Tuesday, 27 January – Thursday, 2 April

Term 2

Monday, 20 April – Friday, 3 July

Term 3

Monday, 20 July – Friday, 25 September

Term 4

Monday, 12 October – Thursday, 17 December



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PRINCIPAL'S WELCOME

Thank you for choosing St Therese's as the 'special place' to nurture your child's learning journey. St Therese's is a wonderful place to work, learn and play.

As a community of learners, founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1925, we value the unique gift of knowing our full potential and applying that learning to a myriad of different situations. We are proud of our history and heritage and value the strong bond that continues with our community. St Therese's Primary School is an integral part of Blackbutt South Parish with the nearby St Therese's Catholic Church our place of worship.

We know that the learning process can be challenging for some and a 'walk in the park' for others. As teachers, we find many ways to differentiate the curriculum to meet the individual needs of all our students. We look at how they learn and how we can best support them in the classroom environment.

Schools are great places to learn 'how to get it right'! We have many opportunities at St Therese's to learn how to build positive relationships with others and in doing so, learn about acceptance, equality, tolerance and understanding. We know that it's not always easy and that those building blocks of resilience and self-belief will help us prepare for the challenges we'll face in life.

We want our children to enjoy their childhood, value our community and grow in confidence as they learn. To do this, we work as a team with families to achieve the best possible outcome for our students. You will feel welcome in the school, make new and valued lifelong friends and will be made to feel a very special member of our St Therese's community.

Sallyanne Stanbridge
Principal





St Therese's Primary School is an integral part of Holy Trinity Parish, Blackbutt North with St Therese's Church our place of worship. May you find your association with our combined community both happy and rewarding.

Vision for Catholic Schools Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle

At the heart of everything, there is always Jesus Christ.
From and for the community of FAITH. From and for EXCELLENCE in LEARNING.
In a rigorous, creative and critical pursuit of TRUTH.

School Vision Statement

To bring Christ and His message, in all its richness,
into the hearts and lives of all.

School Mission Statement

Through partnership with parents and the wider community,
to provide holistic education which guides students to grow
in their relationship with Christ.

This will be achieved through:

- Living Christ each day – witnessing the Gospel
- Ensuring that students have opportunities to succeed
- Challenging and assisting each child to develop to their full potential
- Assisting parents and the Parish in the faith and formation of the children
- Providing opportunities for community involvement
- Encouraging parents to be as involved as possible with their child's growth and development
- Providing a happy, caring and safe school environment
- Showing respect for students, teachers, parents and our environment
- Providing open communication between school and home
- Providing excellent teaching and learning programs
- Encouraging each other to work as a team
- Providing opportunities for children to experience the beauty of service for others
- Accepting differences as strengths within our society.

St Therese's School was founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1925 and the charism of Mercy forms an intrinsic model for our Community – the qualities of welcome and compassion form part of our Core Values of Care and Compassion, Integrity, Respect and Inclusivity. The Sisters commitment to the community to provide Catholic Education to children has provided a rich heritage of which we are justifiably proud. We have a close knit community that includes generations of families.

Our Patron Saint, Therese of Lisieux demonstrated a will to be one with God. St Therese's spirituality of, "My way is all confidence and love", continues to inspire us in our community. Her "little way" demonstrated commitment to the tasks and to the people she met in everyday life. St Therese is a patron of Missions and we continue her legacy by supporting missions in our Social Justice initiatives within our community and globally.

The school has strong connections with the Parish and, as our Parish Church, St Therese's is close by, students are encouraged to attend Masses when available. Our Catholic Identity is evident in the daily life of our school and in the

teaching of the Catholic Curriculum documents and in all other curriculum documents. Our aim is to teach a worldwide view that invites and encourages students to think, to ponder and dialogue and connect with Jesus Christ. In this way, they will be led to realise and value the inherent goodness, sacredness and dignity of all creation. We provide a diverse and engaging curriculum, in which students receive a Catholic Education, which fulfils their spiritual, emotional, academic and physical needs. Our whole school community gathers weekly for Liturgy in our Assembly time. Catholic symbols and images are evident in classrooms as well as the Main Hall and our Office and Staff areas.

The school's motto, "Be True" is a constant reminder to be true to God, self and others. Our Mercy charism guides us to reach out to others and embraces the Catholic Schools Vision statement: "At the heart of everything there is always Jesus Christ."

SCHOOL PRAYER

Oh God, my Father in Heaven,

I offer you myself and all I do this day.

I join in the offering,

Your Son made to you on the cross.

Mary, my Mother, help me to love God today.

St Therese pray for us,

St Mary of the Cross, pray for us.

Amen

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**At the heart of everything
there is always Jesus Christ.**

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SCHOOL INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

St Therese's Catholic Primary School

Principal

Sallyanne Stanbridge

Office Staff

Belinda Palmer, Louise Dawson, Jenny Hurst and Fran Johnson.

Office Hours

Monday to Friday 8am - 4pm

Years of Schooling Offered

Kindergarten to Year 6 Co-educational

Address

Burke Street, New Lambton NSW 2305

Postal Address

PO Box 321, New Lambton NSW 2305

School Phone

4957 4922

Email

admin@newlambton.catholic.edu.au

Website

newlambton.catholic.edu.au





**SCHOOL HOURS /
BELL TIMES**

9:15am – 11:15am	Morning Session
11:15am – 12:00pm	Lunch
12:00pm – 2:00pm	Middle Session
2:00pm – 2:30pm	Recess
2:30pm – 3:15pm	Afternoon Session

SCHOOL PROFILE

St Therese's is a triple stream school of approximately 600 students. The school, working with the Parish, strives to develop an understanding and a commitment to the Catholic faith. The academic curriculum is in line with the NSW Board of Studies K-6.

St Therese's Primary School 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 our Diocesan complaints process or you can access more information on our school website.

SCHOOL ETHOS

Catholic education at St Therese's aims to recognise individual worth and is based on Gospel values. The school is committed to fostering living by these Gospel values, which emphasise the spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and physical development of the individual.

The school recognises the role of the family in education and promotes a partnership among home, parish and the school. This partnership is acknowledged and always encouraged.

St Therese's holds a strong sense of social justice and acceptance, catering where possible for children with special needs within an inclusive framework.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The faith development of the children is of paramount importance at St Therese's.

Classroom teachers work in partnership with parents in nurturing this, through quality religious education programs.

The school works closely with the Parish Sacramental Team in ensuring that enriching sacramental programs are delivered. Children are prepared for the reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation, Eucharist and Reconciliation. All Sacramental preparations are parish based and children are prepared in small family groups. Classroom lessons back up what is done in these groups. All families are encouraged to join one of these groups. Parents are kept fully informed of dates and times relating to Sacramental preparation.

Children have opportunities to be involved in:

- School and class liturgies
- Masses
- Special community days
- Youth St Vincent de Paul Society
- Lotus Educational Fund.



CORE CURRICULUM

At St Therese's the teaching of the core curriculum areas of Religious Education, English and Mathematics occurs in a systematic, strategic way.

Teachers meet regularly in Professional Learning Communities to analyse student results, group them accordingly and plan a sequence of learning that addresses the needs of each of these students identified.

Our guiding principles and beliefs in core curriculum at St Therese's are to:

- Focus on developing 21st Century pedagogical skills in teachers.
- Focus strategic support to all students, including those with learning needs, EAL/D and special talents.
- Provide differentiated, quality assessment that ensures learning is strategic and relevant.
- Facilitate the transfer of special education programs, strategies and assessments into the classroom.
- Implement successful foundations where K-2 students learn through hands-on & play-based learning activities.

ENGLISH

The aim of English in Years K-10 is to enable students to understand and use language effectively. Students learn to appreciate, reflect on and enjoy language, and make meaning in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, critical and powerful.

English is taught in the following focus areas:

- Oral language and communication
- Vocabulary
- Phonological awareness (*Kindergarten*)
- Print conventions (*Kindergarten*)
- Phonic knowledge (*Kindergarten – Year 2*)
- Reading fluency (*Kindergarten – Year 4*)
- Reading comprehension
- Creating written texts
- Spelling
- Handwriting
- Understanding and responding to literature.

MATHEMATICS

The aim of Mathematics K–10 is to enable students to become confident users of mathematics, learning and applying the language of mathematics to communicate efficiently and effectively. They develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and a fluency with mathematical processes that helps them to interpret and solve problems. Students make connections within mathematics and connect mathematical concepts with the world around them. They learn to understand and appreciate how mathematics is a relevant part of their lives.

Working Mathematically is embedded across all the three content strands of Mathematics to develop the processes of:

- Communicating
- Understanding and fluency
- Reasoning
- Problem solving.

CRITICAL & CREATIVE THINKING

The Australian Curriculum organises the key ideas for Critical and Creative Thinking into four interrelated elements:

- Inquiring – identifying, exploring and organising information and ideas
- Generating ideas, possibilities and actions
- Analysing, synthesising and evaluating reasoning and procedures
- Reflecting on thinking and processes.

At St Therese's we provide opportunities for students to develop skills across all 4 areas, including:

- Project based inquiry learning within classrooms, supported by research time with a qualified teacher librarian.
- STEM and coding activities (K-6)
- Play-based learning in Infants
- Code Club opportunities during recess and before school.

Our school has a focus on 'Visible Thinking' – a Harvard project that assists students in developing thinking habits via activities known as thinking routines. You can read more about 'Visible Thinking' at

pz.harvard.edu/projects/visible-thinking

All teachers shepherd and steward curiosity and creativity – enabling students to develop their gifts and focus on their strengths.





WELLBEING

St Therese's uses the Positive Behaviours 4 Learning (PB4L) as our welling framework. This creates quality learning opportunities for children and young people to promote wellbeing. This includes strengthening their physical, social, emotional and spiritual development.

An integrated approach to Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) will be used throughout the school. At times, standalone lessons will be implemented to ensure that the skills are explicitly taught. A variety of resources and programs are used to support student wellbeing.

Physical Activity (PA) and the health of our students is a priority at St Therese's. Children are encouraged to participate in daily classroom energisers to promote concentration, gross motor skills and healthy living. Students learn a range of sporting skills and have opportunities to represent at many levels. The school participates in annual swimming and athletics carnivals and a cross-country event. Students will belong to one of four colour houses:

RED - Wright House – Named after Jimmy Wright a proud Awabakal man.

BLUE – Casey House – Named after Monsignor Vincent Casey, founder and first parish priest of St Therese's.

GREEN – Walsh House – Named after the respected Father Brian Walsh, educator and theologian, a former priest of St Therese's.

GOLD – Cyril House – Named after Sister Cyril, a Mercy Sister and the first Principal of St Therese's.

External providers are utilised to further develop student's physical skills. It is our belief that positive well-being and physical activity go hand in hand.

LEARNING

The curriculum is currently organised into different stages of learning to correspond with school year classes. These stages cover two years of schooling.

EARLY STAGE 1 (ES1)	Kindergarten
STAGE 1 (S1)	Year 1 and Year 2
STAGE 2 (S2)	Year 3 and Year 4
STAGE 3 (S3)	Year 5 and Year 6
STAGE 4 (S4)	Year 7 and Year 8
STAGE 5 (S5)	Year 9 and Year 10
STAGE 6 (S6)	Year 11 and Year 12

LEARNING SUPPORT

St Therese's has a dynamic transdisciplinary team to address the learning and social needs of students with disabilities.

This includes Learning Support teachers, Learning Support Coordinators and Learning Support Assistants. We follow evidenced based practice for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, which is explicit, direct, cumulative, intensive and focused on the structure of language. We incorporate multisensory learning, which involves the use of visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic – tactile pathways simultaneously to enhance memory, and learning of written language. A number of programs run throughout the year within classes and in withdrawal groups, these include Supported Play Group and Assistive Technologies, Zones of Regulation and Write Start.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

The following are available to students attending St Therese's:

- Piano
- Aerobics
- Dance
- Band Tuition
- Guitar
- Code Club
- Chess
- Singing
- A wide variety of sporting opportunities.





PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their children's education. There are opportunities for parents to be involved in numerous ways. These include:

- Sacramental Programs
- Family Masses
- Reading Groups
- Canteen
- Excursions
- Class Helpers
- Craft Groups
- Working Bees
- Swimming & Athletics Carnivals.

We value the assistance given by so many parents, grandparents and friends in the school. These people assist in the canteen, reading, computers, art and craft, sport, dance, ground maintenance and many more.

To be able to volunteer within a diocesan school please refer to the information on page 24 in this handbook.

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**We value the assistance given by
so many parents, grandparents
and friends in the school.**

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GENERAL INFORMATION

ABSENCE FROM SCHOOL

If your child is sick, or absent for any reason, please contact the school within 7 days of the absence. This can be done via the Compass app, sending an email to admin@newlambton.catholic.edu.au or phoning the school on 4957 4922.

If your child arrives late to school, or needs to leave early, please call at the school office and use the Compass kiosk available at the front counter to sign your child in or out.

If you are planning a holiday, and will be away for 10 school days or more, written permission must be obtained from the Principal prior to commencing the holiday. Forms are available from the front office, in the newsletter or on the school website under 'Attendance Information'.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE/ VACATION CARE

St Nicholas OOSH provides a before and after school care service on the school premises, as well as vacation care on a casual and permanent basis.

For details phone 0455 099 594 or OOSH-NewLambton@stnicholasmn.org.au.

ANAPHYLAXIS

Any student enrolled at St Therese's who is at risk of an anaphylactic reaction must complete an *Anaphylaxis Action Plan*, supplied and signed by a doctor, so an individual action plan for treatment can be developed. This assists the school in providing a safe environment for students who suffer severe reactions when exposed to allergens, e.g. food, bee stings, drugs, etc.

CANTEEN

The school canteen operates each day for the benefit of the children. Ms Leeanne Hardgrove is the canteen supervisor. Parents and friends staff the canteen on a roster basis.

Orders can be placed online through Flexischools. Go to flexischools.com.au or call 1300 361 769 to register.

CLOTHING POOL

The clothing pool is provided to assist families with uniform requirements and is located in the Administration building. Families are encouraged to donate outgrown uniforms and use the pool when necessary. Prices range from \$2 - \$10.

Lost property items are stored in tubs near the Year 6 verandah before being placed in the clothing pool.

Every effort is made to locate the owner of lost clothing. It is advisable to have all clothing marked clearly with the child's name.

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Our task, regarding creativity, is to help children climb their own mountains, as high as possible.

Loris Malaguizzi, founder of Reggio Emilia

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COMPASS APP

Compass is a comprehensive student information system that enables the school to effectively manage all information relating to your child/children and their school journey. The system forms part of a broader implementation for the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle. This solution will offer a secure, yet easy, connection to communicate with the school and receive information about your child's journey at St Therese's.

The Compass Parent app is available for you to download. This is our primary source of information distribution. We encourage parents to familiarise themselves with Compass and how Compass works.

The types of information you will find from Compass includes:

- Monitor your child's attendance, and enter in explanations for absences
- View 'My News', a news feed of school announcements, newsletters, alerts and updates
- View your child's schedule, learning tasks and the school calendar
- Download and view your child's semester report
- Parent teacher interview bookings and upcoming events.

You can log into the Parent Portal by using the URL newlambton-nsw.compass.education or download the Compass School Manager app from the *App Store* (iPhone) or the *Play Store* (Android).

You will receive a letter from the school with a unique code that is relevant to you as an individual guardian. Upon your first log-on attempt, you will be prompted to create an individual password. Please be mindful of the importance of protecting this password and username. A parent guide to Compass will also be sent home with this letter. Using the parent guide, follow the instructions to log-into the system and access key information relating to your child. Also, use the opportunity to download the Compass School Manager app on your smartphone. The log in process on the app will be identical to the school log-on. Please ensure you have downloaded the app and allowed push notifications, as well as regularly checking the portal for key information relating to your child/children. This will ensure effective communication between school and home.

The phone version of the app is useful for adding attendance notes. We recommend using the app on a PC or iPad for all other uses of Compass.



LIBRARY

The school has a teacher-librarian and a library assistant. The library is open daily during class time and most lunch and recess times. Formal library lessons are given, and students have an opportunity to borrow from the library on a weekly basis. Children must have a library bag to borrow to protect our books.

DISCIPLINE AND PASTORAL CARE

The school uses the Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) Framework. We use a comprehensive Positive Behaviour Support Policy, incorporating Restorative Practices, an expected behaviour matrix and a Behaviour Management Plan that outlines rights, responsibilities, rules and consequences. These are available for parents on request.

No corporal punishment is administered at St Therese's, nor do we approve of any corporal punishment being administered by adults whether at home or in any setting.

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING

NSW Educational Standards Authority (NESA) previously "The Board of Studies", made it compulsory in 2006, for all schools to provide parents with a student report twice a year, at the end of Terms Two and Four. The report must show assessment of achievement ranging from A to E based on a statistical standard as set by NESA; and effort in each learning area ranging from High to Emerging. St Therese's will give parents detailed information about what their child knows and can do as they progress in each key learning area.

Parent/Teacher Interviews are held in Term One and Term Three. If at any time teachers are concerned about the progress of a child, parents will be notified so that the matter can be discussed. Parents also have the option of making an appointment with their child's teacher if they have any concerns.

COMMUNICATION & APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHER

The school newsletter is published fortnightly on a Tuesday. This will keep you notified of school activities and any school information you may require.

If you are concerned as to your child's progress or wish to talk to the teacher, please inform us by note, email or a phone call and we will be most willing to make an appointment before or after school. Unfortunately, we cannot see parents 'at the door' or while in the playground on duty, as the teacher's first responsibility is for the supervision of the children under his/ her care. Please do not hesitate to make an appointment if you have a concern or wish to discuss a matter with a teacher. The school has a Complaints, Concerns and Resolution Procedure available from the school office. The school also has a website and Facebook page which, is updated with news and events. Also, you should download the Compass app, which is regularly updated with notifications and events.

EXCURSIONS/INCURSIONS

Various excursions and incursions are organised during the year to complement class activities and enhance student learning. Specific permission is required for students to attend incursions and excursions. Teachers will notify you well in advance of such events.

FIRST AID

A well-equipped first aid kit is stored in the sick bay. Teachers treat minor injuries while on duty. More serious injuries are taken to sick bay and parents are notified if necessary. When required we call the ambulance.

GOVERNMENT TRANSPORT

State Transit buses transport the children to and from the school. In the afternoon children awaiting buses are supervised by teachers and placed on the correct buses. Children in the Infant classes and children living outside the 1.6km radius are entitled to free travel.

You can apply online at transportnsw.info/school-students.

A strict code of conduct is laid down for all children using public transport.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The school follows NSW Health Dept information on infectious diseases. Any changes to procedures are communicated via Compass.

PUPIL FREE/INSERVICE DAYS (RELEASE FROM FACE TO FACE)

The first four days of the school year are a pupil free day. This is used by staff to prepare for the start of the year's program. The final two days of the school year are also pupil free days.

Other staff in-service days occur throughout the year and are used by teachers to update on the curriculum and for professional development. You will be notified at least one month prior to each of these days. As part of teachers' professional development they are given release from face-to-face teaching for professional development, programming, assessing, and marking. During this release time, specialist teachers will work with students in the areas of Library and Digital Technology, Performing Arts and Physical Education (PE).

MASSES AND LITURGIES

Masses or liturgies are celebrated on a regular basis. Parents are most welcome at these celebrations.

MEDICATION

If you wish the school to administer medication to your child, you must notify the class teacher as well as complete the necessary paperwork at the office indicating child's name, class, dosage, and time. Any medications given to children will be stored in a secured area. For ongoing medication parents must supply the tablets in a webster pack or similar.

NEWSLETTER

A fortnightly newsletter is available on our school Compass app. The news bulletin is also available on the school website.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (FACE)

FACE groups are organised by the leadership team, to address the interests and needs of our parent body. Subcommittees are facilitated to complete special projects and engage parents in the educational journey of their child/ren.

All parents/carers are invited to engage in FACE groups.

PARENT INFORMATION NIGHTS

Parent information is shared at the start of each year. This may be via a parent information evening or an information note. Parents will be informed at the beginning of the school year of the meeting times. The teachers will inform you of expectations for the class and the various programs that will be in operation.

PARKING

Parking is always scarce around any school. Please take notice of the parking zones and assist in ensuring the safety of your children by adhering to parking zone restrictions. Parents are asked not to enter the school car park to drop off or pick up children.

SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES

School assemblies are held regularly throughout each term. The dates for these assemblies are advised via the Compass app and the newsletter. The assembly begins with the school prayer, and the children are then recognised for the various achievements both inside and outside the school.

SCHOOL DAY

School commences at 9.15am and concludes at 3.15pm. Teacher supervision commences at 8.45am each morning. No child is to be in the school ground prior to this time. Please see the St Nicholas OOSH staff if you need to drop off your child to school before school hours, so the necessary forms can be completed. At dismissal time, children are supervised by teachers until they leave the school or are collected. If you know that you will be running more than 15 minutes late, please ring and inform the school.

SCHOOL FEES

The Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle School Board determines the set fees for each year. These vary slightly from year to year.

See the Catholic Schools website.

The school fee is the parents' contribution towards the recurrent cost of educating their child in a Catholic school.

A percentage of school fees is sent directly to Catholic Schools to assist with the payment of teachers' salaries. The remainder is used for the day-to-day running of the school.

In the case of unusual hardship, please contact the school office or Principal.

A Family School Building Levy per family per year is in place which is set by the Bishop. The money collected is used to repay the school debt and carry out maintenance on the school.

The School Resource Fee supports the cost of educating students and covers a range of costs and resources such as textbooks, exercise books or subject levies, technology and excursion costs. are also applicable. These fees are set at the commencement of each year.

An account for all fees is sent home early each year. They may be paid in instalments (e.g. weekly, fortnightly and monthly) over the year or in full. We accept EFTPOS, cash, BPAY or direct debit (forms available from the office).

Please endeavour to pay all fees and charges as the school relies on each family for its financial support. We rely solely on your fees and the other charges to run the school.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Our school uniform is gazetted in this booklet. We ask all parents to ensure that their children leave home each day wearing full school uniform which includes our school hat. Uniforms may be purchased from Lowes Westfield Kotara.

All children are expected to wear their correct uniform with pride.

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

The school has a Sun Safe Policy whereby children must wear hats during play periods. Children without hats must play in the shade.

Hats are available from Lowes at a reasonable price. A school hat is part of our school uniform and should be worn when leaving for school each morning.



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.

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.**





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 adult 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 condone.

– MOST REV BISHOP MICHAEL KENNEDY

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 adults and empowering them to have their voices heard
- ▶ Training all workers in safeguarding knowledge and skills including indicators of abuse, supporting people to disclose and report abuse
- ▶ Working with statutory authorities to notify alleged abuse and actively 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
- ▶ Improving our compliance with the NSW Child Safe Standards and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards.



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.

VOLUNTEERS

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 read the [Volunteer Induction Handbook](#) and complete all necessary checks, inductions and safeguarding training relevant to your volunteer role. This may mean that 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 6 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 (Phone 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 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 life.

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

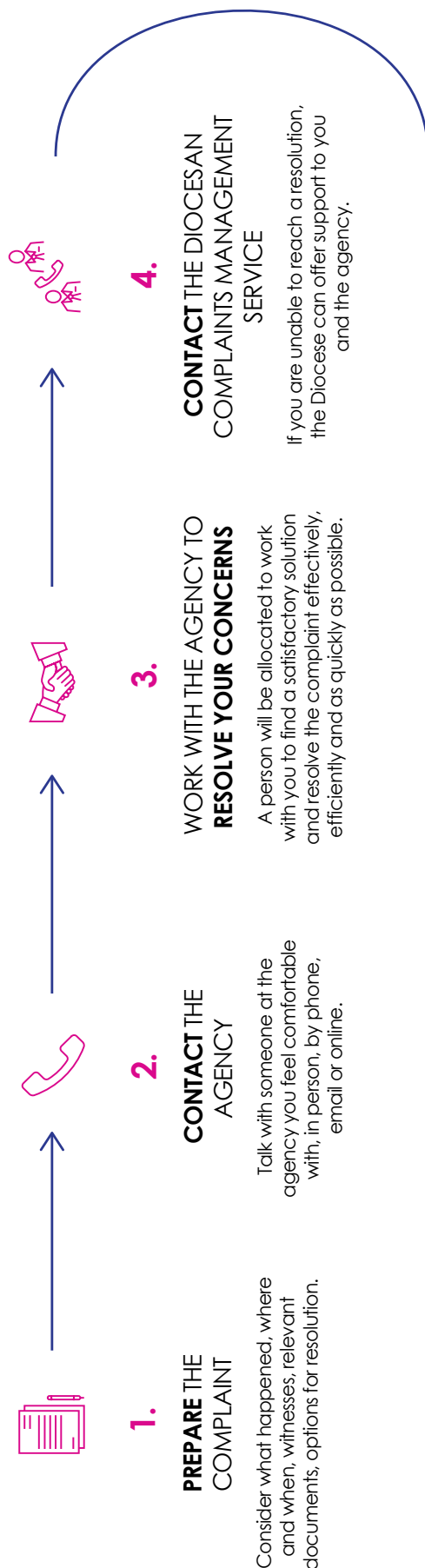
Under this legislation, people who undertake a role in child-related work in a paid or volunteer capacity in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are required by law to have a Working with Children Check Clearance. This 'clearance' can be obtained by applying online at

ocg.nsw.gov.au

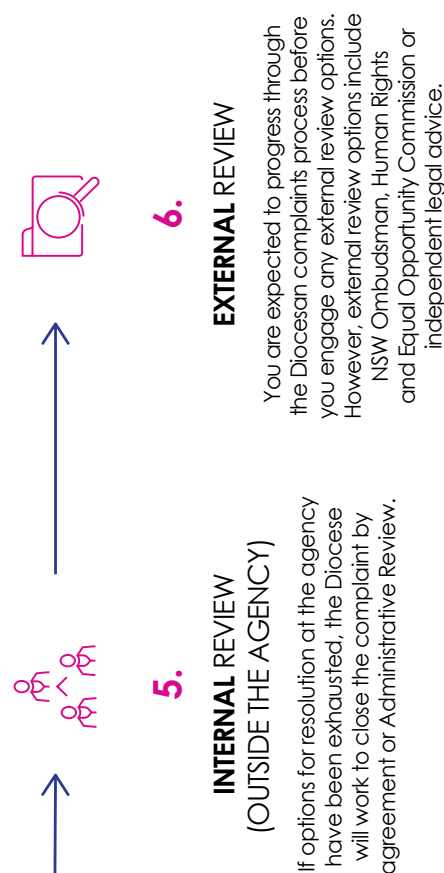
Volunteers receive a clearance for free, and it lasts up to five years.

Exemptions apply for volunteers who are a close relative of a student enrolled at the school. See 'Statutory Screening Selection Tool' on page 26 of the Volunteer Induction Handbook.

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



Review Options



THE COMPLAINT PROCESS

St Therese's Primary School 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 our Diocesan complaints process or you can access more information on our school website.

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).
- ▶ people providing administrative and financial services to the CSO and school.
- ▶ anyone you authorise the CSO and school to disclose information to.
- ▶ anyone to whom the CSO and school is required or authorised to disclose the information to by law, including child protection laws.
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.





UNIFORMS

GIRLS UNIFORM

GIRLS SUMMER UNIFORM

Dress:	Blue with white check
Blouse:	Short sleeved sky blue blouse with crest
Culottes:	Navy
OR	
Shorts:	Navy
Socks:	White ankle
Shoes:	Black leather

GIRLS WINTER UNIFORM

Tunic:	Navy Tartan
OR	
Slacks:	Navy pants
Blouse:	Long sleeved sky blue blouse with crest
Sloppy Joe:	Navy with crest
OR	
Jacket:	Navy microfiber jacket with crest
Tab tie:	Tartan on elastic
Socks:	White ankle
OR	
Tights:	Navy
Shoes:	Black leather

GIRLS SPORTS UNIFORM

Top:	Polo shirt with school crest
Shorts:	Royal blue
OR	
Skort:	Royal blue
Sloppy Joe:	Royal blue with crest
OR	
Jacket:	Navy microfiber jacket with crest
Track pants:	Royal blue
Socks:	White
Shoes:	Appropriate sports shoes

ACCESSORIES

Hat:	Navy reversable slouch hat with crest
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***Available from Lowes at Westfield Kotara**



BOYS UNIFORM

BOYS SUMMER UNIFORM

Shirt:	Short sleeved sky blue shirt with crest
Shorts:	Navy 1/2 elastic
Socks:	White ankle
Shoes:	Black leather

BOYS WINTER UNIFORM

Shirt:	Long sleeved sky blue with crest
Trousers:	Navy
Sloppy Joe:	Navy with crest

OR

Jacket:	Navy microfiber jacket with crest
Socks:	White ankle
Tie:	School stripes
Shoes:	Black leather

BOYS SPORTS UNIFORM

Top:	Polo shirt with school crest
Shorts:	Royal blue
Track pants:	Royal blue
Sloppy Joe:	Royal blue with crest
OR	
Jacket:	Navy microfiber jacket with crest
Socks:	White
Shoes:	Appropriate sports shoes

ACCESSORIES

Hat:	Navy reversable slouch hat with crest
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***Available from Lowes at Westfield Kotara**

School Community Code of Conduct

Members of Catholic school communities in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle agree to nurture and support each other's individual growth in faith, to create communities of respect and tolerance and to engage in the promotion of peace, justice and service of others.

The School Community Code of Conduct reinforces our understanding of the rights and responsibilities each of us has in ensuring we provide an environment where our students can thrive.

Upon acceptance of enrolment and as a condition of continuing enrolment in our Catholic schools, all members of the school community are bound by this Code of Conduct. School staff must abide by the CSO's Code of Conduct for staff members available at: www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/policies

Students in Catholic school communities agree to:

- ▶ Model positive behaviour to other students.
- ▶ Comply with and model school values.
- ▶ Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- ▶ Respect themselves and other members of the school community both personally and through the use of all social media technologies at all times.
- ▶ Respect our school environment.
- ▶ Actively participate in our school community.
- ▶ Support the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

Parents/Carers and volunteers in Catholic school communities agree to:

- ▶ Understand and abide by all diocesan policies, procedures and guidelines, which are available on the CSO website www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/policies
- ▶ Model positive behaviour to their child and all children in the school community.
- ▶ Ensure children attend school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- ▶ Take an active interest in their child's school and their learning and to engage positively in all aspects of their child's learning.
- ▶ Participate in the Liturgical and Faith Life community of the school including participation in all aspects of the Religious Studies program regardless of personal beliefs.
- ▶ Work in a positive manner with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child.
- ▶ Communicate constructively, respectfully and in a spirit of partnership with the school and use processes and protocols outlined in the CSO Complaints Resolution Policy documents when raising concerns.
- ▶ Communicate with their child's teacher or the Principal directly regarding any concerns about their child, other students, staff or community members.
- ▶ Reject aggressive, abusive and confrontational language and behaviour, as this is counterproductive to the sustainability of any relationship. Approaching students, community members and/or staff in a confronting manner will not be tolerated.
- ▶ Support all school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- ▶ Treat all school staff, students, other members of the school community, visitors and volunteers with respect in all dealings with them both personally and through the use of all social media technologies at all times.
- ▶ Discuss with the Principal any barriers to meeting the financial obligations agreed to at the time of enrolment and seek to form an agreement with the school to meet these.
- ▶ Ensure any agreement made with the school is honoured.

GLOSSARY

ACARA

Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting is the body responsible for writing the National Curriculum.

NESA

NSW Education Standards Authority replaced Board of Studies, Teaching & Educational Standards NSW (BOSTES) on 1 January 17.

NESA has increased focus on developing policy, risk-based monitoring of Teacher Accreditation as well as continuing as the authority for standards in curriculum, student assessment & teacher quality.

NAPLAN

National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy

DoE

Department of Education – oversees public education from early childhood (pre-school) through to Year 12.

PEG

Parent Engagement Group. A parent group within the school which meets to facilitate special projects & interests.

KLA

Key Learning Areas are the different subject areas outlined by the Board of Studies. The seven KLA taught in our Catholic Schools are; English, Mathematics, Science, HSIE (Human Society and Its Environment), Creative Arts, PDHPE (Personal Development, Health and Physical Education) and RE (Religious Education).

Syllabus

The documents developed by The Board of Studies in each Key Learning Area that guides teaching programs. The Religious Education syllabus is developed by Catholic Schools, not NESA.

Curriculum

The term used to describe all of the subjects that are taught in schools.

Outcomes

These are the statements within the Syllabus that describe the knowledge, skills and understanding of what is expected to be gained by most students in each stage of development.

LEARNING

Children learn differently and at a different pace. Some students need extra support due to a diagnosed disability or learning difficulty. Schools have Learning Support Teachers (LST) and Learning Support Assistants (LSA).

EAL/D

English as an Additional Language or Dialect.

GE

Gifted Education is a term sometimes used to refer to programs developed for those children who may have special needs with regards to extending their learning.

PB4L

Positive Behaviour 4 Learning

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