



Important Dates

St Columba's Day

Friday 6 June 2025

Public Holiday

Monday 9 June 2025

Student Free Day

Friday 13 June 2025

School Photos

Wednesday 18 June 2025

Last Day of Term -
2pm Dismissal

Friday 4 July 2025

Principal's Report



Dear SCMS Community,

Term 2 has begun with great energy and enthusiasm, highlighted by our recent Parent/Carer and Teacher Interviews and the joyful celebrations of Catholic Education Week. This year's theme, "Shine with Open Hearts," inspires students to lead with love and humility, embracing their roles as beacons of hope and faith within our community. It has also provided a meaningful opportunity to reflect on the strong and supportive relationships that exist between our school and the wider community. Together, we remain committed to placing our children and their learning at the heart of all we do, creating opportunities for every child to thrive.

At St Columba's, we deeply value the partnership between families and the school. There are many ways for parents, carers, and friends to get involved—whether through the Parents & Friends Committee, the School Board, or by volunteering at events and activities. Last week, we celebrated National Volunteers Day—a timely reminder of the importance of community involvement. We warmly invite more members of our community to join us on this shared journey. At our recent P&F AGM, many of our formal roles were not filled for the remainder of 2025. If you're interested in contributing to a formal role, please don't hesitate to have a conversation with me.

This week also saw the completion of the refurbishment of our front office. Feedback from parents, board members, visitors, and students has been overwhelmingly positive. The aim of this project was to align our office spaces with the rest of our beautiful learning environment—creating a welcoming entrance to our school and a pleasant place to work. I extend my sincere thanks to Dwayne Barry Constructions for their excellent workmanship, and to our local tradespeople, including parent Craig Mumford, for his plumbing services.

Recently, I shared with staff and students at Assembly a conversation I had with fellow principals around the importance of reading—particularly reading at home. Parents are their children's first educators, and home reading plays a vital role in early development.

Regular reading strengthens language skills, broadens vocabulary, and fosters a love of books and learning. It also improves imagination, concentration, and listening skills while strengthening the parent-child bond. Creating a reading-friendly environment at home lays the foundation for lifelong learning and academic success. Early exposure to books truly shapes a child's future.

Last week, St Columba's participated in the National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS), an annual event held by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). Each year, a picture book by an Australian author and illustrator is read simultaneously in schools, libraries, homes, childcare centres, and more across the country. Now in its 25th year, NSS is a vibrant, joyful event that promotes the value of reading and literacy. This year's book was "The Truck Cat" by D. Frenkel and D. Snell. A heartfelt thank you to Mrs Mandy Thompson for leading this experience with our students.

In further support of reading, our school will once again take part in the Premier's Reading Challenge (PRC). We encourage all families to support this initiative at home—more information will be shared soon.

Looking ahead to enrolments, in 2025 St Columba's will continue to offer mid-year Reception intakes. If your child turns five between 1 May and 31 October 2025, they are eligible to start school in Term 3, 2025, with no school fees. Children starting mid-year will complete a minimum of six terms in Reception. Please share this information with friends and family. For more details, contact the front office on (08) 8852 7700.

Enrolments are also open for the start of the 2026 school year. Children who turn five between 1 November 2025 and 30 April 2026 can begin school in Term 1, 2026. Please reach out to the school administration to register your interest and book an individual principal's tour. Our Collies to classroom transition program will run from Term 4, 2025, for all children beginning school in 2026. This program is also offered free of charge.

God bless,

Luke Buchanan

Principal

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Leader of Learning

It has been a busy and productive term of learning for the students at St Columba's. We hope the recent Parent Teacher Interviews provided valuable insights into your child's progress and offered practical ways you can support their learning at home. Our teachers are now in the process of preparing school reports, which will be distributed at the end of the term.

We are incredibly proud of the enthusiasm and excitement our students bring to their learning each day. This energy is evident to anyone who visits our school — a vibrant and engaged learning community.

In my role as Leader of Learning, I've been participating in the Teach Well program. This initiative is grounded in strong research and evidence and offers practical, ready-to-use strategies for high-impact teaching. The Masterclass Series has been particularly valuable, equipping teachers with effective techniques to enhance student engagement and learning. I've been actively sharing these insights with our staff during meetings and through individual conversations, focusing especially on strategies to maximise full participation in the classroom.

Alex Buchanan

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Reminder:

School Photos



Wednesday
18th June (Week 8)
Order online or contact the
school office for an order
form

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Reception News



This term in Science, we've been lucky to work with Jo in our school garden, and the students have absolutely loved getting their hands dirty and learning about the living things all around us!

As part of our learning, we explored the difference between real worms and gummy worms. We looked closely at their features and talked about what makes something living. The children were able to explain how real worms move, where they live, and why they're important.

We discussed the importance of having bugs and worms in our garden because they help keep it healthy by breaking down food and improving the soil. But we also learned that birds like to eat them, which led to a fantastic Design and Technology discussion... how can we protect the bugs and worms to make sure our garden continues to thrive?

We're now looking forward to coming up with our own solution to help keep the bugs and worms safe.

Watch this space!

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Junior Primary News



This term in English, the Year 1/2 students are learning how to plan, write, and structure information reports. They are practising how to organise their ideas, write clear factual sentences, and group information into topics. To support their writing, students are exploring the history and faith of SCMS. They are learning about what makes our school a Catholic school, the parish communities we belong to, and the sacred symbols that are important to our faith. This meaningful learning is helping them gather information to include in their own reports about our school. We're having so much fun learning and writing, and we can't wait to share our amazing reports with you soon!

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Middle Primary News



In Week 4, we were lucky enough to work with Jo in the kitchen!

Students did a fantastic job following the steps to make a delicious apple crumble and of course, enjoyed every bite! It was a wonderful hands on experience that combined learning with fun (and full stomachs!).

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Middle Primary News - Reading



This term, our focus has been on reading!

We're very lucky to have Trish volunteering in our classroom, sharing her expertise by reading one on one with each child. Trish has been a valued volunteer at our school for nearly 9 years, we're so grateful for her time and support!

The Premier's Reading Challenge has also begun, and students have been enthusiastically reading at home and recording their progress in their green reading diaries.

In class, we've been working hard on narratives, developing storytelling skills and focusing on grammar, especially the use of capital letters and full stops. It's been fantastic to see their creativity and writing confidence grow!

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Design and Technologies in Year 5/6

This term, the Year 5/6 students have been exploring the fascinating world of mechanical systems by designing and building their own automata devices. Using cams and followers, they've investigated how input and output systems work and how movement can be controlled and transformed.

Throughout the project, students have been developing their skills in planning, selecting materials, and using tools safely and effectively. They've communicated their design ideas using technical drawings and digital tools, and have worked both independently and collaboratively to bring their concepts to life.

Science in Year 5/6 – Biological Adaptations

This term in Science, the Year 5/6 students have been investigating how living things survive and thrive in their environments. They explored how structural features and behaviours help animals adapt to specific habitats, and examined how changes in physical conditions—like temperature or water availability—can impact survival.

As part of this unit, students created detailed dioramas and accompanying written investigations to showcase an animal, its unique adaptations, and how it responds to environmental changes.

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Literacy Coaching

The image shows four overlapping 'Class Reading Charts (based on DIBELS) 2025' for Years 3, 4, 5, and 6. Each chart is a grid with columns for Student, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The charts show reading frequency for various students, with some cells highlighted in red (x5) and others in yellow (x1). The charts are stacked, with Year 3 at the top and Year 6 at the bottom.

From the desk of our Literacy Coach, Mandy Thompson:

One of my roles at school is as Literacy Coach. Through it, I work with students, teachers and ESOs with the aim of developing students' ability to comprehend, create and use language effectively. That involves all of us working as a team to develop these students' skills for Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Viewing and presenting information across various curriculum areas. In other words, what we as teachers and ESOs can do to help students develop their literacy abilities, will directly assist them in EVERY subject that is taught at school. No talented Maths student will get far if they cannot read the words in the question.

ESOs have been working consistently to hear students' reading. Class teachers aim to hear everyone read throughout each week. I work with students from Year 1 to Year 6, testing their reading level with PM Testing. When I test each student I determine at what level a student is able to read with reasonable fluency, and to understand the text. I also use this 1:1 opportunity as a teaching moment, explicitly highlighting helpful strategies, from breaking down a long word into more manageable chunks, to how to pinpoint facts to answer comprehension questions.

The GOLDEN KEY to reading success (and therefore greater success in every subject area) is frequency of reading, that is regular practice. You as a parent/ caregiver have a very powerful influence. If you work in that team along with us, hearing your child read for 10 minutes a day, each day, you will be giving them the greatest boost of all. What power you have!

Regards, Mandy Thompson.

Photo: Reading lists for hearing students read are based on their DIBELS test results so some student need to be heard every day, (red highlight) some at least 2 times (yellow highlight) and the rest every week.

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Performing Arts



It has been a busy and exciting term as we prepare for our upcoming school musical, Alice in Wonderland, which is really starting to take shape!

Performance Date Reminder:

Thursday, Week 7, Term 3 – 4th September

Light Church, Edithburgh

Matinee Performance: 11:30 AM

Evening Performance: 6:30 PM

Students with speaking roles are reminded to continue rehearsing their lines at home. When we return in Term 3, we will begin full run-throughs starting from Act One — without scripts. If your child needs specific songs or practice materials, please let me know and I will upload them to Seesaw.

Costume preparations are underway with the help of some wonderful parents and grandparents. If you would still like to get involved, we'd love to have you on board! No sewing experience is required — if you're happy to help with hot glue, we'll be holding a few costume-making afternoons in the coming weeks.

If props are more your area of interest, I'd also love to hear from you, as we're getting ready to begin work in that area too.

This production is a true team effort — many hands make light work — and it's such a joy to see the show coming to life. Thank you for your continued support in making this a magical experience for our students!

Alex Buchanan

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Library News

What a busy first half of the term we have had in the Library. Our Book Fair was well supported with the library receiving \$125 to spend on books. We celebrated National Simultaneous Storytime with Mrs Thompson reading to all the children.

Our Book Club Issue 4 will close on the 10th June so can all orders please be in beforehand.

We are also working through the Premiers Reading Challenge books with children and finally starting to explore The Children's Book Council of Australia Short Listed Books for Book Week.

Book Week theme this year is 'Book an Adventure' and runs from August 16th to 23rd.

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Sporting News



We are well into the year with a range of sporting events taken place and also to take place in the near future.

Being a country school we are very fortunate to have so many sporting options available not only through SAPSASA but the Catholic Sports.

We are always well represented and the students attitudes and sportsmanship are always well received and noticed.

Some events that have taken place already are Interschool Athletics, YP Football Carnival , YP Netball Carnival and YP Cross Country.

Congratulations to Archie Phasey and Archer Mason selected for the SAPSASA Football team carnival held in Adelaide this week.

Keep a look out for more up and coming sporting opportunities that will be available to our students.

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We are the SRC team that ensure students voices are heard and facilitate in correct manner in school life.

We want to collaborate and create positive changes in our school community.

We empower students fostering a sense of ownership within our education setting.

Last term we thought it was raised that we are always planning and creating events so we thought a process of steps in a brochure form would benefit future planning.

How St Columba's Memorial School are turning ideas into actions:

- Determine Clear Goals – set clear and specific goals for your idea. Well defined goals help you focus on what you want to achieve and provide a clear direction for next actions.
- Make a detailed plan – Create a detailed plan, including specific steps, schedule and required resources A good plan ensures you know what to do and when.
- Build a support network – Build a support network of individuals who can provide advice, assistance and encouragement. Support from friends, family, principals and teachers can provide additional motivation and valuable perspective.
- Take action and stay flexible – Start implementing your plan with concrete first steps. Be flexible and ready to adjust you strategy based on feedback and changing situations. Concrete action is the key to realising your ideas.

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SRC - Excursion



The SRC have been busy creating a more effective recycling school environment. We are making sure that each class has a scrap bin so all food waste can be put in the compost bin in the garden and each class has a paper recycle bin.

Don't forget to check your lunch boxes and try to recycle as much as you can.

Suzie took us down to the Sort and Save Shed to look at how they recycle cardboard, newspaper and magazines.

Did you know that The Yorketown Progress Association recycle – 84 tonnes yes!!! 84 tonnes of cardboard, 20 tonnes of magazines and 28 tonnes of newspaper this year alone. A total of 132 tonne saved from going to landfill.

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We are having a Milo and Muffin morning on Thursday 5th June, with the muffins being cooked by our wonderful Jo and SRC team.

Dairy Free and Gluten Free options will be available.

Please bring a gold coin donation to receive a yummy treat to warm you all up.

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FRIENDS

WOMEN'S & CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

Join Us and Help Make a Difference for Rural Families!

The Friends of the Women's and Children's Hospital Yorketown/Warooka Auxiliary is looking for new members.

We are a passionate local volunteer group raising much needed funds for the Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide, supporting families from rural communities.

The money we raise helps the hospital purchase vital equipment contributing to rural families returning home as soon as possible.

If you are keen to make a difference, enjoy being part of a friendly team, and love getting involved in fundraising and community events, we would love to hear from you!

Got a question or have an idea?

We'd love to chat, please reach out anytime!

Contact Anne Collins, President, Yorketown/Warooka Friends of the WCH Auxiliary,

anneecol@bigpond.net.au

0438521644

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