



Parent Handbook 2021



Creating

Innovating

Celebrating

Welcome to St. Joseph's Community

St Joseph's Catholic School is steeped in tradition and has been providing a Catholic education to the families of Boorowa since 1882. The school aims to nurture students to be highly educated and skilled and foster in students the values of Jesus Christ. Students are then called upon to be sensitive to these values when embracing social issues and finding their way through life. Our school motto is "Together in Christ" and this is reflected and promoted in all school activities.

All the children at St Joseph's are respected for their uniqueness and dignity. We provide a curriculum, which is diverse, creative and innovative. The school is incredibly well resourced in all areas, particularly technology and this provides a modern and challenging curriculum. The curriculum offers all students the skills and knowledge required for them to face an increasingly challenging global community.

Our School community is also part of the wider community that works closely with the Parish Priest, parents, teachers, students, members of St Patrick's Parish and wider local community. It is with these genuine partnerships that we seek to give the children the opportunity to grow in wisdom, love for one another and faith. We are a diverse learning community who are challenged to live the values of Jesus Christ.

Our school is open to all who are willing to commit to and support the values and philosophy of Jesus Christ. We are a creative, innovative and celebrative community, which is open to all students regardless of differences.

As the Principal of St Joseph's Primary School, I warmly welcome and invite you to become a member of our community. I look forward to working with you and welcome your inquiries.

Kind Regards,

Mr. Mark Birks
Principal



Our Mission Statement

St Joseph's is a Catholic school community which strives to prepare students to be life-long learners; challenging and supporting them to achieve their best and to be active members in our global community, guided by the teachings of Christ.

As a school St Joseph's strives to be a school that

- ❖ Is inclusive of the whole community.
- ❖ Encourages children to be respectful, be responsible and to be life-long learners
- ❖ Nurtures young minds for the challenges of making the future brighter.
- ❖ Develops the educational, social, physical and religious dimensions of a student.
- ❖ Keeps abreast of changing education and technological changes.
- ❖ Cares for the environment.
- ❖ Provides a safe, clean environment in which the students learn.
- ❖ Encourages children to do their best and believes making mistakes are a part of growing.
- ❖ Has teachers working in partnership with families, Parish and the wider community.

Our Vision

St Joseph's is a Catholic school community that has at its core a culture that is continually

CREATING, INNOVATING and CELEBRATING

through its educational environments, its events and activities, its facilities, its resources and its Teaching and Learning programs.



Enrolment

Enrolments for Kindergarten are taken during and after May of each year. The Archdiocesan Enrolment Policy states that children commencing Kindergarten must be at least (5) five years of age by 31st July.

St Joseph's welcomes families who wish to provide a Catholic Education for their children. Enrolments are called and accepted in Terms Two and Three with vacancies being offered to Catholic families and siblings followed by other families seeking a Catholic Education for their children. When a limited number of vacancies exist, enrolments are evaluated through an Enrolment Committee with its members being our Parish Priest, Principal and a School Community Council Member.

Following the collection of applications, an interview with the Principal may be arranged with families new to St Joseph's, followed by existing families who have younger siblings enrolling.

Enrolment Requirements

All parents/guardians are required to sign the Application Form and agree to its contents before enrolments can be accepted. Documentary evidence of Date of Birth and Baptism (if applicable) must be provided.

An immunisation certificate is also required. Non-immunised children may be excluded from school at times of outbreak of some diseases.

Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn Parent Commitment Agreement

All parents/guardians are required to sign the Catholic Education Canberra and Goulburn Parent Commitment Agreement. This agreement outlines the commitment of parents to their children, the children of other parents, the school and to the wider Catholic Identity of the school. The signed agreement will need to accompany the Official Enrolment Form.

Orientation for New Students

Children commencing at the school in the new year will be invited to St Joseph's to spend some time with the Kindergarten class teacher/s in Term Four. There are Five Orientation Sessions- Three ½ Days and Two Full days. Uniforms are not necessary for these days.

Children commencing in Years 1-6 are invited to spend an Orientation Session with a tour of the school and information session with the Principal on appointment.

School Fees

St. Joseph's is a low fee paying school. A family fee set by the Catholic Education Commission Archdiocese of Canberra Goulburn is payable each Term. In addition to these fees there is also a Maintenance Levy which is a Family Fee and a Consumable Levy which is a per student fee. There is also a Technology Levy which is a student fee. It is the policy of St Joseph's School that the inability to pay School Fees should never be a reason for exclusion from a Catholic school and parents are encouraged to speak with the Principal regarding this matter so that arrangements can be made.

Fees for the current year (per term) are:

Tuition Fees: \$330.00 per family (set by the Catholic Education Commission)

Resource Levy; \$110.00 per child

Maintenance Levy: \$95.00 first child

Maintenance Levy: \$24.00 second child

Maintenance Levy: \$18.00 third child

Technology Levy: \$46.00 per child

Curriculum

At St Joseph's we aim to provide a challenging and comprehensive curriculum with a strong focus on Religion, Literacy, Numeracy and Technology. We strive to differentiate the curriculum to cater for students with diverse learning needs. We believe that independent, co-operative and collaborative learning skills, problem solving strategies and critical thinking are essential elements in a child's development.

Religious Education is based on the Brisbane Diocese Religious Education Curriculum comprised of four strands: Sacred Texts, Beliefs, Church and Christian Life. This curriculum underpins all our teaching and learning experiences. The values, attitudes, inter-personal skills, community wellbeing and welfare, and social justice actions that is embedded throughout our school policies and practices stem from this document, based on our Catholic traditions, faith and scripture.

English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, History, Science and Geography, Creative Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Dance and Drama), Personal Development, Health and Physical Education—are taught through an ‘Inquiry Approach’ as prescribed by the NSW Board of Studies Syllabus documents.

Other special features of the extra- curriculum opportunities at St Joseph’s include: Life Education; School Excursions; Student Leadership Programs, ie: Parliament; Gross Motor Programs; Robotics/Lego Club; Choir; After School Sports Programs; Parent Information Sessions on Literacy and Numeracy; Public Speaking; Operation Art Exhibition; School Play; and Representative Sports.

ICT is a major focus at St Joseph’s with all classes having LED Televisions, Wifi, and an iPad for each student provided by the school. The School also has a STEM Centre that contains a 3D printer, a variety of Lego Robots and Bee Bots as well as a Green Screen for filming and a bank of ‘Raspberry Pie’s’ for coding.



Assessment and Reporting

Assessment is on-going through-out the year in all Key Learning Areas. Children in Years 3 and 5 sit the National Testing in May.

The school uses a wide variety of assessments in all subject areas. The assessments range from in-class assessment activities before, during and after units of work to assess students prior knowledge, their learning and understanding of concepts taught and to assist teachers to focus on individual needs of all students, to research-based standardized assessments that compare students skills, understanding and achievement compared to year level students completing the same assessments.

All assessments conducted at St Joseph's are aimed at informing teachers of student achievement and understanding in order to aim teaching and learning to improve all individual's skills, knowledge and application of understanding. These assessments aid teachers to report to parents on the achievement and development of their child.

Written Reports go home at the end of each Semester, with an Interim Report that goes home in Term One. The school conducts 3 Way Conferences from K to 6, early Term Three. This means the child sits with the parent and teacher and identifies the successes they have made and challenges they face, based on the Semester One report, so as to set Learning and Living goals for future focus.

Parents are able to see their child's teacher at any time. It is required that parent's make an appointment, through the front office contact, so that a suitable time can be arranged.

Staffing

St Joseph's has an excellent pupil/teacher ratio that maximizes the opportunity for success for all students. In addition to four classroom teachers, the school offers a Learning Support Teacher who assists teachers and students with implementing Personal Learning Plans.

St Joseph's also has a Librarian a Music/Drama Teacher and an Art teacher. The School also has a number of Teacher's Assistants supporting teachers to meet student learning needs, a Secretary and a Cleaner. The School Executive consists of the

Principal and the AP/Religious Education Coordinator.

Behaviour Management Policies

At St Joseph's, we aim to provide a Behaviour Management Policy that is based in the philosophies of the 'Positive Behaviour for School' framework which:

- Ensures an atmosphere of mutual support.
- Encourages children to develop self-discipline and sense of worth, to respect the rights and feelings of others and to take responsibility for their own actions.
- Ensures that children, staff and parents can clearly understand the school expectation of student behaviour.
- Establishes a set of protocols for dealing with anti-social and unacceptable behaviour.
- Establishes clear guidelines for contacting parents.

The St Joseph's School Community rejects all forms of bullying. All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

All members of the school community contribute to prevent bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Our members of staff work closely with parents for the benefit of the children in their care. Parents are always welcome to visit the school and speak with the Principal and/or teaches. It is necessary to make an appointment first because interruptions during class time detract from the children's learning. Parent Information Nights are held in early Term One each year to acquaint you with the classroom and school procedures and to enable you to meet your child's teacher. Each class has a school/home communication sheet or diary in case of Year 5/6 that parents may pass on messages to the teachers.

COMPASS Parent Portal

During 2021 St Joseph's Primary introduced the COMPASS Parent Portal. This portal can be accessed by parents using an App downloaded onto mobile devices or through the desktop web version. The portal allows parents and the school to communicate in a variety of ways quickly and easily. The school and class teachers can notify parents of

events, news, excursions and changes to normal school routines. While parents can quickly and easily send attendance notes through to their child's teacher, approve attendance at school events and excursions and view School Reports.

School Visitations

In the interests of school safety and in accordance with CEO Policy and guidelines, parents and visitors are required to go to the office and sign in for the time they are at the school. All volunteers must have a 'Working with Children' number to work alongside and with the students in their learning environment.

Absences and Leaving School Grounds

Parents are requested to inform the teacher in writing if they know in advance that their child/ren will be absent from school. For accountability purposes, student absences need to be explained using the COMPASS Parent Portal.

Students arriving late to school for any reason will need have a parent accompany them to the front office to be marked present on the COMPASS attendance roll. Also, any student leaving the school for any reason should have their parents report to the front office to have their child marked off the COMPASS roll.

Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours unless accompanied by a parent or a parent note of explanation as to the reason for leaving and who the student is leaving with.

Buses/Pick Up

Children catching buses will assemble in the bus shelter inside the school grounds. All bus students will be supervised and escorted to their bus by a staff member. Student being picked up by parents will wait with a staff member inside the main school gate until a parent is at the main gate waiting to collect their child. In hot or wet conditions, students waiting to be picked up by parents will be collected from the bus shelter exit gate.

No games are played at this time to ensure the safe departure of all students.

Contact Details

Parents are asked to notify the school immediately if there is a change of address, home or work phone numbers. It is in the interest of your child's welfare that this information is kept up to date. This can also be done using the COMPASS desktop web version.

School Mass and Prayer Assemblies

During the school year the whole school attends the Parish Mass held at 12.30pm each Tuesday. A class is rostered on each week to host the various roles involved in the Mass. As a school, we celebrate events of special religious significance in the Church's Calendar eg. Ash Wednesday, Easter, Holy Week, St. Joseph's feast day and Advent. We also host a Children's Mass for all students, parents and staff twice a term at the 6pm Saturday evening Mass. This allows us to link with parishioners from St Patrick's Parish. Twice a term each one class has the responsibility to organise a whole school Prayer Focus Assembly. Parents are always welcome to join our celebrations.



Friends of St. Joseph's

In 2006 it was decided to combine the School Board and the Parents and Friends with a new body taking over the functions of both bodies. The new body was named "Friends of St Joseph's Community Council". This body now advises on school policies, oversees the school budget, organises activities to build a sense of community and organises and assists with fundraising to assist the school. The meetings occur each second Wednesday of the month during school term and are open to all.



School Uniform

An important element of our School is the wearing of a school uniform, as we believe that this creates a pride in ones' self and a pride in the School. All children are expected to wear the School Uniform unless a note, from parents, indicate an inability to do so. Uniforms are available from the School and local suppliers. A clothing pool is also available.

Girl's Winter Uniform

Tartan Pinafore
White Blouse with Peter Pan Collar
Navy Blue Tights
Navy Blue socks
Black School Shoes
Navy Blue Woollen Jumper



Girl's Summer Uniform

Blue and White Uniform
Short White socks
Black School Shoes
Blue School Hat
Navy Blue Jumper (if necessary)



Girl's Sport Uniform

Green and Gold tracksuit (with logo)
Green and Gold Polo Shirt (with logo)
Green Skirt/Green Unisex Shorts/Green Skort
White Socks
Sports Shoes



School Uniform

Boy's Winter Uniform

Grey Trousers
Mid Blue Long Sleeve Shirt
Navy Blue Tie
Grey Socks
Navy Blue Woolen Jumper
Black School Shoes



Boy's Summer Uniform

Grey Shorts
Mid Blue Shirt
Long Grey Socks
Black School Shoes
Navy Blue Jumper (if necessary)



Boy's Sports Uniform

Green and Gold Tracksuits (with logo)
Green and Gold Shirt (with logo)
Green shorts with gold stripe/Green Unisex Shorts
White Socks or Green and Gold Hooped Football Socks
Sports shoes



Clothing Pool

A clothing pool is conducted by the Friends of St Joseph's - the Community Council. Each year a representative is elected to oversee the Clothing Pool. The Clothing Pool stocks new and pre-loved clothes. Donations of clothing that your children have outgrown would be greatly appreciated. Purchase of these clothes is by donation.

Sun Smart Policy

The school recognises the dangers posed by exposure to ultra-violet solar radiation and has developed a Sun Smart Policy in accordance with recommended guidelines. In Terms 1 and 4, students are to wear the uniform wide brim hats. Our policy is ***"No Hat—No play in the sun"***.

Accessories and Hair

The school has a number of rules in regards to the types of accessories and hair styles that students are able to wear. Students may wear a watch, a necklace with a religious symbol, a signet ring and studs or sleepers for earrings. All long hair must be tied up with a hair tie and/or ribbon/small bow – these are to be in the School's colours – blue, green or gold matching the uniform of the day. Student's hair must be of natural colour. Students are not permitted to wear make up or nail polish.

General Information

School Hours

Students may arrive at school after 8.35am – as this is legally when supervision is provided. Classes commence at 9.00am in the morning and concludes at 3.15pm. Morning Recess is from 11.00am to 11.25am and Lunch is from 1.00pm to 1.50pm.

Welfare and Wellbeing

The School is proud of its commitment to the welfare, safety and wellbeing of its students. It prides itself on having a culture with a friendly, caring, and family atmosphere. Children are aware of their responsibilities within our school environment, and are encouraged to support, and respect the School Rules implemented through the values of our Making Jesus Real Program, the Positive Behaviours for Learning Program and the Kids Matter Program. The school's staff model respect, tolerance, and a deep sense of concern for all the students.

Mobile Phones

In accordance with NSW regulations and legislation Primary students are not be permitted to use mobile phones during the school day. If the need arises for a student to contact home they may use the school's phone at the front office. The School does recognise that a phone may be required for travel times to and from school, and as such may remain in the child's bag for the duration of the day.

Student Health

If a child has one of the childhood diseases, then he/she will have to stay at home until well or as is authorised by a Doctor. Unimmunised children who have been in contact with a sick child must stay at home during the outbreak; this will prevent the disease from spreading to other children and people in the community.

All staff are trained and qualified as First Aiders and able to perform Resuscitation if required. Our office Staff will care for any student who becomes ill at school. If necessary, his/her parents, or a nominated contact person, will be informed and asked to take the child home. In the event of an accident occurring, the following procedures will apply:

- (1) Minor Accidents (that is normal scratches and bruises). The child will be treated and returned to class.
- (2) Accidents of a more serious nature (that is broken limbs, serious cuts, head injuries etc.) Parents (and an Ambulance if necessary) will be notified.

Medication will only be dispensed to children with written parental permission. Please speak to the office staff if your child has special medical requirements.

Periods of Exclusion from School

The Public Health regulations require children with infectious diseases be excluded from school for the periods stipulated below.

Chicken Pox:	Exclude until recovered or for at least 5 days after the eruption first appears.
Conjunctivitis:	Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.
Diarrhoea:	Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.
Hand, Foot and Mouth:	Exclude until blisters have dried.
Headlice	Children are not permitted to return to school until live lice are killed and <u>all eggs have been removed</u> .
Hepatitis A:	Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and a certificate is provided by a medical practitioner stating that the person is no longer infectious.
Impetigo:	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surface are covered with a dressing.
Measles:	Exclude for at least 4 days after the appearance of the rash.
Mumps:	Exclude for at least 9 days after the onset of symptoms.
Ringworm:	Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.
Rubella:	Exclude until recovered or for at least 4 days after the appearance of the rash.
Whooping Cough:	Exclude for at least 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.

School Counsellor

Catholic Care provides our school with a professional counsellor two days per term. The services of the counsellor are available to both parents and students. Requests for appointments can be made through the front office or by contacting the Counsellor directly.

Food Service

While the school does not have its own Canteen – lunch orders are provided by the Bakery, it does have a servery. Students are able to bring meals for re-heating, or noodles requiring hot water to school for their lunch. Staff will re-heat the meals and add hot water at the beginning of the Lunch break. Year Six students also sell ice-blocks during the warmer seasons and Hot Chocolates during the colder seasons as a fundraising activity and to enable students to have purchasing experiences.

Book Club

Scholastic Book Club is available through the school and is an excellent way of allowing children to purchase reading material. Throughout the year catalogues are sent home for perusal, orders may be placed on line via LOOP, or sent into the front office. The school library benefits from our purchases and is given a donation from scholastics based on the expenditures to purchase books for our Library.

Book Fairs

Two Book Fairs are held each year. One is held in Term One and the other is held on Grandparents Day in Term Four. Once again the Library receives a percentage of proceeds from these Book Fairs for the purchase of new resources. The Book fairs are a great opportunity for parents and family to buy quality books for their children or as presents and gifts for young friends and family members, as well as encouraging the children's love of reading.

After School Sports

During each Term four to six After School Sports sessions are held on a Monday afternoon from 3.30pm – 4.30pm . There is a different sporting focus each Term. Some of the sports the students have encountered in recent years are Golf, Lawn Bowls, Tennis, Lacrosse, Hockey, Gymnastics, Athletics and Aussie Rules Football. The sessions are free and students from all grades are able to attend.

Music Tuition

A specialist music teacher come from Young School of Music once per week to take students for individual tuition. Students can choose from piano, guitar and violin. This is an optional addition at the school for families wishing to involve their children. All tutorials are held within school hours.

Parents can contact Young Regional School of Music on (02) 63825735 or via email at: yrs@hotkey.net.au to express their interest or to make arrangements for tuition.

Mini Vinnies

Mini Vinnies is a group of primary students (Years 4 and 5) who plan fundraising activities and events to help those in need within their school, the local community and global community. Mini Vinnies introduces children to social issues, to the St. Vincent DePaul Society and to living their faith through action.

Burrow House and Pre-school Visits

At the beginning of the year, students are placed in vertical groups and will go to Burrowa House to visit and interact with its residents through games, activities and sing alongs. A group of year 5 students will visit the pre-school children once a week and share their time, skills and knowledge while reading to and interacting with the preschool children in playtime.

Public Speaking

Students in Stages 2 and 3 (Years 3 – 6) have the opportunity to compete in the Archdiocesan Catholic Schools Public Speaking Competition. This is an annual competition, which includes the levels of In School, Inter School and the Western Region Speak Offs. The School's overall Champion Speaker also competes in the annual ACT and districts Rostrum Speak Offs.

School Productions

All students participate in the production and presentation of a School Play each biannual year. The students will practice for this production during school time. This production is usually held in Term Four and over three evenings. These productions are advertised in the local community and the audience is open to all.

Competitions

All students participate in the annual Cherry Festival Writing Competition, submit an Art and Written piece for the annual Boorowa Show and create a piece for the school's annual Operation Art Exhibition. Students in senior classes are selected to participate in the annual Australian Mathematics Challenge as well as the Writing and Mathematics Competitions from the University of NSW.

Excursions

All students participate the Healthy Harold program presented each October at the school. The fees for this excursion are covered by the Community Council. Years K-2 will participate in day excursions to venues/activities/performances relating to their units of work. Years 3-6 may also extend this into overnight excursions. Each biannual year Years 5 and 6 have an excursion to a major city for a week, for example Sydney or Melbourne. The costs of these excursions are covered by parents.

During the year there are a variety of opportunities for sporting carnivals, inter-school events/activities and regional Liturgies and events that the school relies upon parents to assist with transportation.

Excursions in town are usually walk to and from excursions.



School Initiatives

The teachers and students at St Joseph's are responding to the late Pope John Paul II's call for an "ecological conversion". A number of small ecological projects have been implemented or are in the planning stages to show students how to live more sustainably and to leave a lighter "ecological footprint" on our beautiful planet.

The Australian Catholic Bishops have released several statements and documents that emphasise that it is imperative for all Catholics to heed Pope John Paul II's call. In 2007 the Most Reverend Bishop of Wilcannia-Forbes Christopher Toohey endorsed the document *On Holy Ground: An Ecological Vision for Catholic Education in New South Wales*.

Some Initiatives at St. Joseph's include:

Paper and cardboard Recycling

Each classroom and office area has a paper/cardboard recycling crate. All paper and cardboard is recycled through Eurobodalla Shire Council pickup. Three yellow 'wheelie' bins are located in key positions in the school. Year 5/6 students are responsible for maintaining this system.

Food Scraps Recycling

Food scraps are collected in the specially labelled bins located outside each room and in other key positions. Bins are collected by Year 5/6 students and are diverted from the general waste stream to either the worm farm or a system of composting bins. The compost bins also collect the grass/tree/shrub clippings when the school grounds/gardens are mowed and cut.

Water Tanks

The School has three water tanks underneath its COLA area. Rain water is collected and used for drinking water. The student's drinking water is pumped into its on tank and treated before consumption. The school also has a bore water tank. This water is used to maintain its gardens and grounds.

Vegetable Garden

In 2019-2020 a new sustainable vegetable garden has been constructed – sponsored by the Friends of St. Joseph's Community Council. This garden uses the castings from the food scraps and vegetation recycling to enrich its soils. This garden is located near the covered outdoor play equipment, so it can be tended during morning tea and lunch times when the students are at play. This garden is also used as a part of the Science units of work across all grade levels. Some of the fruits of labor have are used by the students to create soups, pasta sauces and relishes for consumption.

School Chooks

The School has two resident chooks. Students from the school delight in feeding the chooks their fruit peels, sandwich crusts and other food scraps, while our senior students feed them with chook feed. The eggs are collected and used to cook with small sample foods during the year.



A Message from our Parish Priest

One of the essential traits of our Catholic Church is that it is 'missionary' in its very essence. It is always a 'work in progress' and it means that the Church is never able to see itself as a 'completed product'.

Our Catholic Schools are a vital means of enabling the Church to both educate both her students and their parents as to what it means to live, to know about and then to share the Gospel message of Jesus Christ.

This is never an easy or a straightforward thing to do for anyone, as there is a need to both know a culture in which a message needs to be conveyed.

Please as parents remember how vital your role is in being 'the first and the most important educators of faith' for your child. That you are able to do that effectively is so important. Please be assured that our teachers and myself are with you in fulfilling your own mission

Fr Jiss

Administrator



Contact

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