



THE FUTURE OF CATHOLIC EDUCATION
ST XAVIER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
PARENT GUIDE

WELCOME TO ST XAVIER'S

Our school is situated on the corner of Bloomfield Street and Henry Street Gunnedah and caters for children from Kindergarten to Year Six.

We are a Catholic Professional Learning Community set in extensive well kept grounds. Our students work in state of the art learning spaces where opportunities to improve are provided daily.

The atmosphere at St Xavier's is very friendly and children are always encouraged to do their best, whether in class, at sport or on the playground.

We are committed to improving the faith, learning and wellbeing of our students and staff.

Please take a moment to read through this booklet and see what our school has to offer.

“This is what Yahweh asks of you, only this:- That you act justly, that you love tenderly, and that you walk humbly with your God.”



THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING ST XAVIER'S



JEN HONNER PRINCIPAL

St Xavier's School continues the fine tradition established by the Sisters of Mercy in 1879 of providing high quality affordable education to the children of Gunnedah and district. Catering for children from Kindergarten through to Year 6, all classes work in large, modern, architect designed learning spaces. Access to the very latest technology is available to all students and resources are targeted to meet the learning and wellbeing needs of all students.

The school provides an outstanding education where children are nurtured in a Catholic Professional Learning Community. We are driven by the belief that every child can learn and we believe in building and maintaining positive and caring relationships between staff, parents and students.

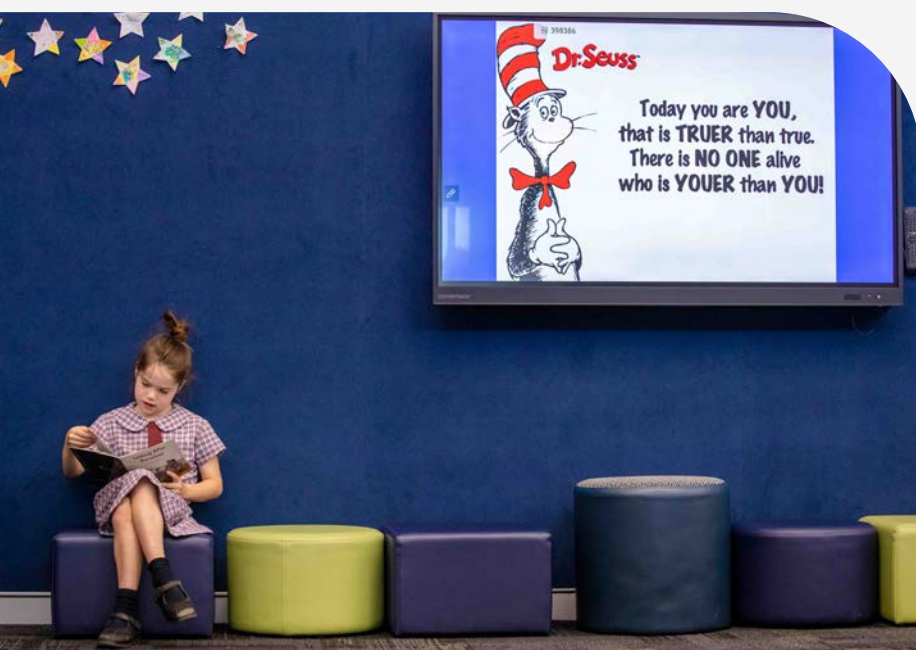
St Xavier's staff are a highly skilled, professional team who work collaboratively and share the responsibility for student learning and wellbeing. The Living Well, Learning Well Student Support Framework is a multi-tiered approach to academic and behavioural needs and focuses on positive statements and language about expected behaviours.

The school has a proud history of sporting achievement and participation with a high degree of representation in athletics, swimming, league, union, netball and many other sports at local, regional and state levels. As well as its own extensive music and performance programs, St Xavier's students are heavily represented in local cultural celebrations with the Eisteddfod being a highlight of the school calendar.

The large open play areas are welcoming and safe. St Xavier's has a modern, fully equipped performance and multipurpose hall. We pride ourselves on our sense of community and we welcome direct personal involvement from parents in the classroom and in the sporting arena.



LIVING WELL, LEARNING WELL



The Living Well, Learning Well Framework- This document is a student support framework for all students in the Diocese of Armidale. It is underpinned by the belief that all staff have a universal and unconditional positive regard for all children. We believe that the collective capacity of our St. Xavier's team will result in increased learning, wellbeing and life-opportunity outcomes for our students.

We have Rules for Living as a framework for social behaviour expectations;

- I am safe
- I am valued, respected and cared for
- I am a learner

A variety of assessments and screeners are used to gain a full picture of the relevant needs and learning styles of students experiencing difficulties. Once student's needs are identified, their learning program is modified and they may be assisted in small groups or individually in class.

In addition to this, students with an identified disability receive individual support to enable them to function successfully in the classroom.

GROWING STRONG MINDS

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH



Positive Education has the best outcomes when it is implemented as a whole school approach incorporating explicit and implicit teachings. The implications of this are that the wellbeing of the whole school community, including teachers, ancillary staff, parents and students, is encouraged to thrive.

In 2017 St Xavier's implemented a wellbeing package called 'Growing Strong Minds'. It is a whole school approach to wellbeing for all children from K-6, staff and parents. It is based on developing twenty-four scientifically validated character strengths.

It is important to note that we all have these strengths in varying degrees, and they all change and develop over time. Some of our strengths are more prominent, and these are referred to as our 'signature strengths'. Research into character indicates that when we know and apply our top five signature strengths our wellbeing improves. Signature strengths have also been found to be positively associated with academic performance, motivation and effort (Lounsbury, Fisher, Levy, & Welsh, 2009).

CURRICULUM



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Catholic Principles and Values below underpin all we do in our school.

- The Primacy of God
- The Fidelity in Relationships
- The Common Good
- The Sanctity of Life

Through the Catholic Principles and Values and their application in every subject, students will be helped to develop a worldview that focuses on God and God's desire for all human beings to create a world where everyone is respected and cared for, the environment is managed for the future and resources are used for the benefit of all. It is the explicit teaching of these principles and values that sets our Catholic schools apart.

All children attend Masses and Liturgies. Visits are made to St Joseph's Catholic Church and the Eucharist and Reconciliation are celebrated each term.

MATHEMATICS

Students develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of learning experiences across: – number and algebra, eg whole numbers and fractions and decimals – measurement and geometry, eg length, area and time – statistics and probability, eg data and chance. They develop their problem-solving skills, and mathematical reasoning and communication.

CURRICULUM



ENGLISH

Students develop their language skills through activities involving speaking and listening, reading and writing, and viewing and representing.

- They learn about language and literature through working with a wide range of print, spoken, visual, media, multimedia and digital texts.
- They interpret and express their views on what they hear, see and read.
- They create written and digital texts, and deliver formal and informal presentations.
- There is a requirement that students experience a range of texts including Australian works, multiculturalism, Aboriginality and Australian identity, and Asian perspectives.
- There is an increased emphasis on grammar and the teaching of quality literature.

The whole school is involved in an English Block from 9am to 11am each day. The staff record all results in literacy on the student data wall for use in Professional Learning Team meetings.



HISTORY

Students investigate their personal, family and community history.

- They develop understanding of Australia's Indigenous and Colonial History and how Australia became a nation.
- Students learn about: - historical concepts such as viewing an historical event from a different point of view and using historical sources for an investigation.

CURRICULUM



GEOGRAPHY

Students investigate people, places and environments.

- They explore geographical concepts, such as place and sustainability, through real world examples and issues.
- Students learn how to acquire, process and communicate geographical information using geographical tools and inquiry.



SCIENCE

Students develop their skills in using processes of Working Scientifically and Working Technologically to answer interesting questions and develop creative solutions to important 21st century problems.

- They develop their curiosity and understanding about the Natural Environment and the Made Environment through learning about the Physical World, Earth and Space, the Living World, the Material World, Built Environments, Information and Products.
- Students learn about the influence and relevance of science and technology in their lives now and in the future.



CREATIVE ARTS-MUSIC, DRAMA AND VISUAL ARTS

The study of the creative arts enables young people to engage with and enjoy exploring expressive forms, ideas, and values. The creative arts provide opportunities to enchant, explore, investigate and respond to the world through making and performing.

Children have the opportunity to be selected for the Infants or the Primary Choir and may be involved in the School Brass Band. All children are involved in appreciating music, organising sound, listening and performing (singing, playing or moving) with our specialist Music teacher, Mrs Sloan.

CURRICULUM



PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Through the study of Personal Development, Health and Physical Education courses, students develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes needed to take action to protect and enhance their own and others' health, safety and wellbeing in varied and changing contexts. Physical education is fundamental to the acquisition of movement skills and concepts to enable students to participate in a range of physical activities – confidently, competently and creatively.

Our specialist PE teacher, Mrs Paul covers Active Lifestyle, Dance, Games and Sport and Gymnastics. The school has a full-sized multipurpose centre which is used extensively for Sport and Phys Ed. We also have an outdoor Gross Motor Skills Activity Centre, large grassed playing fields, a brand new multipurpose outdoor court and a comprehensively stocked sports shed.

Children have the opportunity to be involved in representative sport from the age of 8 in a wide range of sports. All interests and ranges of abilities are catered for with children being able to represent the school at netball, football (league, touch, soccer and union), cricket, softball, hockey, basketball, horse riding, athletics, swimming and cross-country.

The St Xavier's Multipurpose Hall is a wonderful facility and provides all weather access to basketball, netball, volleyball, badminton, highjump and other court sports as well as fitness, dance and gymnastics.

TECHNOLOGY

At St Xavier's every student has access to their own Chromebook. Ipads and various robotic resources are available for use. Children in all grades have access to interactive whiteboards with teachers incorporating the use of this technology in all subjects. Students work in the Google Suite of Apps using Google docs, slides, drive and forms. Students access tasks for some topics through Google classroom.

LIBRARY

The St Xavier's School Library is an exciting and dynamic learning space offering a large range of information resources for the entire school community. The Library provides a supportive, safe and interesting space for meeting, learning, reading and playing.

The school library program is designed to develop and foster information literacy skills through the use of both print and online resources. Students are taught to research in an efficient, effective and safe manner, equipping them with vital skills for the future.

Students visit the Library regularly to borrow and read books, play games and research using technology such as World Book Online. The students are also able to borrow and read ebooks and audiobooks through the SORA platform.

Twice a year we have a Book Fair where families have the opportunity to buy books and assist the Library to raise funds for additional purchases. Books are constantly being updated.

Each fortnight, classes attend library lessons and have the opportunity to borrow books and to learn library skills. New resources are discussed and students are actively encouraged to develop the life skill of "reading for pleasure".



COMMUNICATION

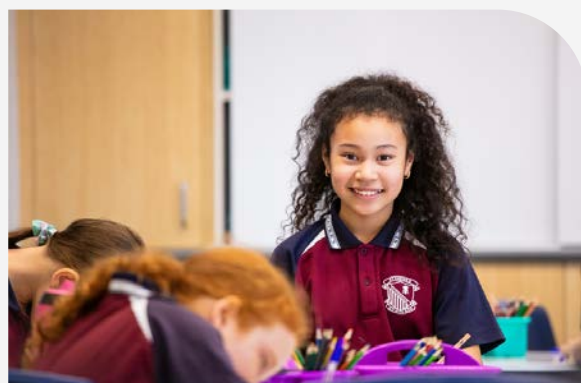


St Xavier's School recognises the value in open communication between staff and parents. Teachers are also able to be contacted using their professional email addresses.

COMPASS/SEESAW

St Xavier's uses Compass Parent Portal, where parents can access school reports, attendance details, news and emails. Compass also has a payments center. This portal is our main source for finding information.

The Seesaw app is used in each grade and provides parents with an exciting way to see their child's work or to hear their child explain an activity.



NEWSLETTERS/FACEBOOK

The St Xavier's Newsletter goes out every fortnight. Information is also available on the school website and there are regular updates on the school's official Facebook page.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

Assessment is ongoing and is used before, during and after a topic. Standardised testing ensures students are achieving at an equitable level to those compared to children from across the State.

Reporting to parents takes place on a regular basis. A formal report is accessible in Compass in Term 2 and in Term 4.

Student Led Conferences require students to take most of the responsibility for reporting what they have learned. This is the student's moment to share his or her reflections on achievements and challenges with his or her parents and seek assistance to meet their goals. To prepare for this responsibility, students must evaluate and reflect upon their work on a regular basis. These conferences take place mid year.

The purpose of the conference is to:

- Celebrate growth in the child's learning and achievements
- Provide an opportunity for the child to articulate their learning and learning goals
- Give parents a chance to engage in their child's learning
- Ensure accountability for students, teachers and parents



UNIFORM

Our full uniform is available from Lowes in Tamworth. You can also order online through the Lowes website. (The exception is school hats which are still available at the school office.)

At St Xavier's we are proud of our school uniform. All children are required to wear the following:

GIRLS WINTER

Check Winter Tunic Long OR Girls Navy Pleat Front Pants
 LS School Blue Deluxe Shirt
 Check Tie
 Navy V-neck jumper (not round neck)
 Navy Crew Socks OR Navy Tights
 Plain black school shoes

GIRLS SUMMER

Summer Check Dress OR SS School Blue Layback Shirt with Navy Girls Pleated Shorts
 Navy Crew Socks
 Plain black school shoes

BOYS WINTER

Navy Blocker Trousers
 LS School Blue Deluxe Shirt
 Check Tie
 Navy V-neck jumper (not round neck)
 Navy Crew Socks
 Plain black school shoes



St Xavier's School

BOYS SUMMER

Navy Blocker Shorts
 SS School Blue Layback Shirt
 Navy Crew Socks
 Plain black school shoes

BOYS AND GIRLS SPORT

Navy Microfibre Shorts with Embroidery
 SS Maroon/White/Navy Sports Polo with Embroidery
 White Crew Socks (no logos or patterns)
 LWR Navy Track Pants
 Navy/Maroon/White Jacket with Embroidery

OTHER

HATS- School logo bucket hat must be worn all year round. School representative caps can only be worn at representative sporting events.

JACKETS OR COATS- May be worn on very cold days, but must be worn over the school jumper or school jacket.

JEWELLERY- Students may wear a watch, one plain signet ring, one plain gold or silver bangle, one set of sleepers or plain studs (no jewels, stones or pearls).

HAIR- Should be neat and tidy at all times. Boys and girls with long hair must have it tied using plain hair ties. Small maroon, white or navy ribbons are allowed.

No makeup or nail polish at any time

SHOES- School shoes must be completely black shoes, boots or joggers. Skate style school shoes are not acceptable.

TIMETABLE



8.30AM

The first hooter of the day. If any children arrive before this they must remain seated outside their classroom until this time before they can play.

8.50AM

Children go to the toilet, wash their hands and have a drink before moving to class. Morning Assemblies are held on Mondays. All gates are locked, access is through the front Office.

11.00AM

Recess

11.30AM

At this hooter, the children stop playing and go to the toilet, wash their hands, have a drink and line up outside their classroom for lessons.

1.00PM

The children are escorted to the Lunch Area where they sit quietly and eat their lunch.

1.10PM

The children wait for the teacher and if they are finished eating they are allowed to go and play.

1.20PM

The hooter is rung to remind everyone that it is half time lunch.

1.40PM

This hooter reminds children that lunch has finished and to go to the toilet, wash their hands, have a drink and line up for class.

3.05PM

The children line up outside their classroom to be escorted to Bus Lines, Kiss & Drop, Walk Line or Pick Up.

CHILD SAFETY ARRANGEMENTS



SCHOOL HOURS

The school gates do not open until 8.00am. Children are supervised at school from 8.30am and until the last bus leaves in the afternoon. If a child is leaving the school during school hours, they must be signed out by an adult at the Office.

PICKING UP CHILDREN

The many buses, private vehicles and pedestrians at the end of the school day make the area around the school potentially very dangerous. There are a couple of options for parents collecting their children from school at the end of the day. Parents can come to the front gate of the school for 'pick up'. It is important to remember that parents are then responsible for ensuring the safe conduct of the children to their car. Parents are also encouraged to utilise the 'Kiss and Drop' zone on the school side of Lt Bloomfield St. The children are supervised at 'Kiss and Drop' by a teacher. Please remember to queue in an orderly manner. Other options are buses and walk line.

PERSONAL AND MEDICAL DETAILS

Parents are urged to contact the school if there are any changes to addresses, contact numbers, family circumstances or medical details. It is vital that we have up to date records for all students.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

ABSENTEES

Parents of absent children will be sent an SMS message. Please explain your child's absence on the Compass Parent Portal. You may also write a note or email as to why your child was absent. Absentees must be explained within 7 days or they remain a permanent "unexplained absence" on your child's record.

Parents should note that high levels of absenteeism must be reported to Community Services.

BUSES

A number of Bus companies operate in the Gunnedah Area. For many children bus travel is free. All applications for Bus Travel must be done online through the Department of Transport.

CANTEEN

The School Canteen is open every day of the week and is able to provide a wide range of healthy food and tasty snacks. The preferred method of ordering and paying for lunch is via the Qkr App.

Parents who are available to assist in the Canteen can contact the office.

LUNCHES

Please provide both morning tea and lunch for your child. The whole school also promotes a fruit break during each day. Please provide fruit or vegetables (preferably cut in small pieces).

Drink Bottles WATER ONLY

SCHOOL FEES

School Fees for 2024 are as follows:

- 1 Child \$372.00 per Term (4 Terms per Year)
- 2 Children \$603.84 per Term
- 3 Children \$755.18 per Term
- 4 Children \$845.34 per Term

Statements are emailed and can be paid on the Compass App Payment Center or you can pay via Bpay or Eftpos at the office.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MEDICATION

Medication required during school hours should be brought to the attention of the office staff. **ALL** medication is to be kept at the office. **ALL** medication must be clearly labelled and in its original packaging. We require written instructions clearly outlining the details of the medication.

It is important we have current asthma/allergy and anaphylaxis plans. These should be updated annually.

Immunisation Certificates are required at the time of enrolment.

PROPERTY

- St Xavier's provides most items needed for the education of the children.
- All clothing and personal property brought to school must be clearly labelled with your child's name.
- Children's school bags/back packs should be clearly labelled and of a reasonable size.
- Although pencils/writing books etc are provided by the school, older children often like to bring in their own items. These too should be labelled.
- No toys or pets are allowed at school unless for a special occasion.

OTHER POINTS

- Younger children require a spare change of underwear in their Backpack in case of an accident.
- A painting shirt (large) – long sleeve T Shirt or man's shirt with elastic wristbands is required.
- If your child has shoelaces please practise tying laces as early as possible.
- Encourage independence
- Your common sense is appreciated when listening to your child's stories about school. At times they may be "larger than life". If you have any concerns please contact the teacher immediately.
- Say goodbye to your child in the morning and leave immediately. This enables your child to socialise quickly with their peers. Talk about playing with the Infants children to start with in the playground, not with a primary brother, sister or friend. This will help them make friends with children of their own age much faster.

OUR SPORTING HOUSES

MARIA GORETTI

Born 16th October, 1890 in Corinaldo in Italy.

Her parents were very poor so she did not attend school. When Maria was 12 years old she was killed. As she was dying she forgave the person who attacked her.

Maria said, "Yes, for the love of God." She teaches us to forgive and trust in God.

CARMEL

Carmel House is named after Our Lady of Mount Carmel. She appeared to an Englishman, Simon Stock, on 16th July 1251.

She presented him with a brown scapular. Mary said anyone who wore it would be assured of her protection all their lives.

"This is a safeguard in danger, a pledge of peace..."

FATIMA

Fatima House is named after a place in Portugal called Fatima. It was there that Our Lady appeared to three children in 1917. They were Lucy, Jacinta, and Francis.

Our Lady taught them the Rosary. Wonderful miracles occurred at the spot where Mary appeared. Today Fatima is a holy place where people from all over the world go to pray and be healed.

COOLOCK

Coolock House is owned by the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin Ireland.

The Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy, Catherine McAuley, built Coolock for the sick, the homeless and the uneducated. This was how the Sisters of Mercy started.

"We should be shining lamps, giving light to all around us."

SPORT SELECTION AND PATHWAY OPPORTUNITIES

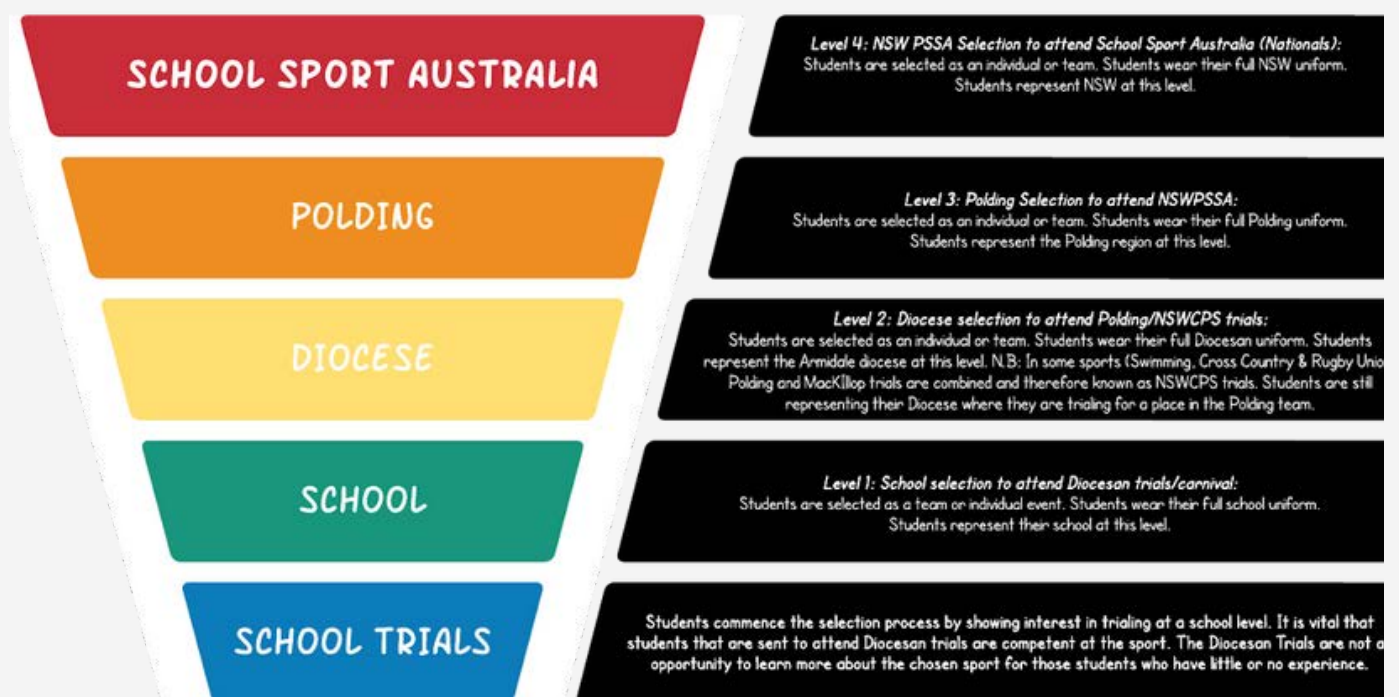
For all individual and team sports an Armidale diocesan team is selected to participate at the Polding Trials. The Polding region includes Bathurst, Maitland/Newcastle, Broken Bay, Lismore and Wilcannia/Forbes dioceses.

Parents of students selected in an Armidale teams will be required to register student details online through the Catholic Schools NSW Sport website. This will require you to log on, receive a password then enter relevant details. Once on the website listed above click into the HELP icon for instructions on what to do to register. Helpful tips can also be found at the bottom of this page.

A team representing the Polding region is entered in the N.S.W. Primary School Sports Association (NSWPSSA) state championships. At this level, children from Catholic, Independent and Government Schools compete together.

Individual children are invited to participate in trials for the following Armidale representative teams: Tennis, Basketball, Softball, Cricket, Touch, Rugby League, Rugby Union, Australian Rules Football, Soccer, Hockey and Netball. Students can also be nominated for Golf, AFL, Rugby 7's, Softball and Diving as trials for these sports are not held in the Armidale Diocese. Further information about any of these sports via your School Sports Coordinator or Heidi Hardaker (CSO Coordinator Sport K-6).

A pathway explanation has been provided in the image below.



KINDER AT ST XAVIER'S

Starting Kindergarten is an important time for children and indeed for the whole family. It is in some ways, a moving away from a world of parent and family and into a world of other children. It is a big step on the journey towards growing up. A good start at school therefore can have far reaching effects.

St Xavier's offers a sound start to school life. Kindergarten students are exposed to a wide variety of activities targeting the various ability levels and learning styles. Children are grouped based on individual assessments and screeners so that all students are explicitly taught at their point of need. Education Assistants are available to assist in this group work and individual activities.

At St Xavier's Kinder students can look forward to participating in activities such as:

- Drawing, colouring, writing letters and numbers, learning sounds and words leading to reading books and writing stories.
- Counting, grouping, sharing and measuring to make mathematical sense of our world.
- They will also listen to stories and share their own stories in News Time.
- Art time will see them painting, drawing, cutting, pasting and manipulating materials to create works of art.
- During sport they will develop their motor skills and coordination by exploring different ways of moving, developing ball skills, introducing team cooperation and of course using all the wonderful gym equipment in the hall.



KINDER AT ST XAVIER'S



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD GET READY FOR SCHOOL

There are many ways that parents can help to make the transition to school easier. Some of these are:

- Help your child to recognise their own belongings.
- Encourage your child to gain independence by going to the toilet themselves, dressing themselves, putting away their own toys and performing simple household tasks.
- Use a variety of equipment (pens, pencils, textas, paintbrushes, sticks in the dirt) to draw, to scribble or to write.
- Read stories, sing nursery rhymes and play games that involve counting with your child.
- Build your child's co-operation skills by playing games that involve taking turns.
- Encourage your child to talk about experiences with you.
- Provide your child with opportunities to stay with other adults and mix with other children, such as Grandparents, uncles/aunts, friends etc.
- Attend any upcoming orientation sessions.

KINDER BUDDY PROGRAM

To help Kinder students settle into school life, they are assigned a Year 6 student as a buddy for the year. The Year 6 students look after the young ones in the playground and help make them feel safe and included. The buddies also visit the classroom and help with reading.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT



St Xavier's School encourages the involvement of parents through:

- assistance in the classroom
- coaching sporting teams/helping at sporting events
- involvement with the P&F Association
- being elected to the School Advisory Council
- helping in the school canteen
- sharing in assemblies and school celebrations

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The P&F is a joint association made from St Xavier's and St Mary's College parents. Being a part of the P&F is a rewarding experience and is one way you can help make a difference for every student at our schools. The association aims to strengthen the partnerships between family, school and the wider community for the benefit of development and learning of all the students at St Xavier's and St Mary's.

The P&F meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5.00pm. For further details contact catholicschoolspandf@gmail.com



SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

The School Advisory Council is made up of elected parent representatives and nominees from various school groups. It assists by providing advice to the Parish Priest and Principal in the fulfilment of their Christian responsibilities for the Catholic School.

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



JEN HONNER
Principal



LEANNE HERDEN
Assistant Principal



LEISA SHORTIS
Leader of Pedagogy



KATRINA MCCUMSTIE
Inclusion Support
Teacher



BRIDGIT MURPHY
Religious Education
Coordinator
Leader and Mentor of
Learning K to 2



ST XAVIER'S PRIMARY SCHOOL
BUILDING A STRONG FUTURE
CATHOLIC EDUCATION



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