MacKillop
St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

Newsletter.

Volume One

6 February 2026

Principal's Letter.

Principal's Prayer

Loving God, as we begin this school year, may we follow the example of Saint Mary MacKillop by striving to always listen to your call, act with kindness, and serve others with a generous heart. Help us to be courageous and faithful like Mary, trusting in your guidance each day. Amen.

Dear College community,

Welcome to the 2026 academic year!

I hope this year has begun smoothly and positively for each of you. It has been wonderful to witness the enthusiastic and seamless start to Term 1, with both students and staff returning refreshed, inspired, and ready to embrace new opportunities. It is a great honour to join the MacKillop community as your Principal, and I am deeply committed to leading our College with purpose and vision as we embark on this exciting journey through 2026 and beyond.

Each year, we welcome new teachers and support staff to St Mary MacKillop College. It is my pleasure to publicly welcome the following colleagues who have joined our community this year: Aaron James, Adriano Tedde, Alex Prescott, Allen Boston, Amber Proctor, Anastasia Pereira, Anna Stincic, Anthony Boshoff, Charlotte Gearside, Desmond Gomez, Esmarie Boshoff, Harley Hagan, Hasham Butt, Jasmine Motbey, Jayda Love-Casson, Joseph Carroll, Kaitlyn Catchpole, Melissa Crane, Melissa Tonnet, Nathan Wagner, Nicole Mossfield, Nicole Handford, Sarah Brice and Thomas Cooper.

As parents, we know the attributes of a great school – I think any parent could articulate these in a few words. As a leader, the same sentiments apply with relentless commitment and loyalty to what is right and just. And as a Catholic leader, an even more profound encounter is experienced where life and work are so aligned that the passion for what we do translates to every aspect of our organisation. I commend you on the thoughtful decision of choosing St Mary MacKillop College for your children's education. You have chosen a community that is dedicated to fostering not only academic excellence but also the holistic development of your child. The outstanding culture was immediately evident on my first visit - a welcoming atmosphere, positive relationships, happy staff, engaged learners, shared values, and a sense of joy, inclusivity, and community that nurtures the whole person. We have much to celebrate as a community!

I hope my legacy at MacKillop is one that leaves a lasting and positive impact on the lives of others, reflecting values of love, compassion, service, and hope. Our 2026 Liturgical theme, "*Encourage one another...*" (2 Corinthians 13:11) serves as the foundation for all that we aim to do in our daily work. It also aligns with the Archdiocesan theme, **"Get up! Listen! Go!"** inviting us to be attentive to God's voice, responsive to the needs of others, and courageous in living our faith through action.

Congratulations

On Wednesday, our 2026 Padua Student Representative Council were officially inducted at the first assembly of the year. Congratulations to our new members. These students have been chosen because they have shown the kindness, courage, and commitment it takes to lead by example.

As we celebrated this special occasion together, I encouraged all students - whether they are in Year 7, 8, or 9 - to think about how they can be a leader in their own way. Maybe it's by helping a friend, standing up for someone who needs support, or simply showing kindness to others every day. Leadership isn't just about wearing a badge - it's about being someone others look to, someone who makes the world a brighter place.

I look forward with great enthusiasm to the year ahead.

With respect and encouragement to you,

Jacqueline Heffernan • Principal

What's Been Happening

School returns for 2026!

The 2026 academic year is now underway, with 2,110 students commencing at MacKillop across the two campuses.

The College warmly welcomed 440 new students across the school – including 360 Year 7s – and 25 new staff members. Notably, the College also welcomed one new Principal, with Jacqueline Heffernan joining MacKillop at the start of this year.

On Monday 2 February, our Year 7 students enjoyed having the entire Padua Campus to themselves for their first day, while students in Years 10, 11 and 12 commenced at the St Peter's Campus.

Year 7 were joined at the Padua Campus by Years 8 and 9 on Tuesday 3 February.

The College congratulates all students for the way they have started the year. We wish you the best of luck for 2026!

What's Been Happening

Padua Student Representative Council

Congratulations to our Junior Campus SRC members who were sworn in at the Padua Campus assembly on Wednesday.

Campus Captains
Charlotte Cooper & Noah Tapp

Mindygari Captains
Olivia Staltari & Shashank Deepak

Gurabang Captains
Georgie Hart & Thomas Conlon

Meup Meup Captains
Lillian Gerada & Nicholas Burbidge

Ngadyung Captains
Arya Petkovic & Beau Polglase

Year 8 SRC
Mia Rusan, Jayden Lekamarachchi, Jordon McLean & Arok Dau

World Challenge: Borneo

At the end of 2025, students in Year 11 embarked on an adventure travel program with World Challenge. The expeditions are designed with a focus towards leadership, resilience, teamwork, conservation and sustainability. Students departed on Sunday 30 November, and returned Sunday 14 December having participated in various activities such as hiking, camping, community engagement and discovering what Borneo has to offer.

Student Achievement

Hudson Stirton, Lachlan Farmer, Roy Barbaro, Luka Exposito and Leo Ryan (Year 8) all represented the ACT at the 2026 National Club Futsal Championships. Both U12 and U13 teams won the competition. Additionally, Hudson and Lachlan were both selected in the Australian Futsal Allstars team.

Sofia Ramirez de Arellano (Year 8) has been selected to represent Australia in soccer at a World Cup Tournament in Barcelona in March.

In the school break, Faith Williamson (Year 12) received a local Australia Day award for Young Sportsperson of the Year.

Information & Notices

Parent Information Nights

Parents and carers in Years 7 and 11 have been invited to information nights next week. Both of these events will be held at the Padua Campus.

For both sessions, we would kindly request that parents and carers park only in designated College areas as neighbouring venues and schools may lock their gates after hours.

YEAR 11 PARENT/CARER INFORMATION SESSION

Date: Monday 9 February
Time: 5:30pm - 6:30pm
Venue: Moira Najdecki Theatre, **Padua Campus**
Mackinnon St, Wanniassa

Due to the unavailability of the Performing Arts Centre, this will now be held in the **Padua Campus** Theatre, Wanniassa. The session will include a presentation and a meet and greet with staff. It will run for approximately one hour.

YEAR 7 PARENT/CARER INFORMATION SESSION

Date: Tuesday 10 February
Time: 5:30pm-7:00pm
Venue: Physical Education Centre, Padua Campus
Mackinnon St, Wanniassa

Groups on the evening are based on your child's allocated Pastoral Care Class House Group. If you are unsure of this, the information is located on each child's timetable. Your child's Pastoral Care Class is also indicated within the Compass Platform.

Jacklyn Johnstone & Lachlan McNicol • Heads of Campus

Pastoral Care Teachers and Coordinators

Pastoral Care Teachers play an essential role in supporting students' wellbeing and academic achievement in their PC Class. In most cases, PC teachers have continued with the same classes from 2025 into 2026. The PC Teacher is usually the first point of contact for parents for issues of a general nature and can also direct enquiries to other staff members.

The Pastoral Care Coordinators who provide leadership and direction to each year group have written a letter of introduction to families.

The Pastoral Care Coordinators this year are:

- **Year 7:** Miss Anna Vandenbroucke & Mr Henry Mahony
- **Year 8:** Ms Kathleen Galvin & Mr Hayden Schliebs
- **Year 9:** Miss Anita Ramirez, Mr Matthew Smith & Mr Steve Lowe
- **Year 10:** Mrs Esmarie Boshoff & Mr Peter Johnson
- **Year 11:** Miss Belinda Fox & Miss Kate Warren
- **Year 12:** Ms Leonie Sullivan & Mr Charles Bootes

The Directors of Student Wellbeing who work closely with the coordinators on each campus to support student wellbeing and academic achievement are:

Padua Campus: Mr Nathan Wood
St Peter's Campus: Mr Braden Longo

Paul Durham • Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care

Information & Notices

Introducing SchoolTV

Your Trusted Wellbeing Resource

St Mary MacKillop College is proud to partner with SchoolTV, a trusted online wellbeing platform designed to support both families and schools. SchoolTV provides parents and carers with clear, expert-led guidance on the issues impacting young people today. It brings together practical strategies, credible information, and evidence-informed resources from leading specialists and organisations to help you feel confident in supporting your child's wellbeing.

SchoolTV is easy to access, private, and available anytime, making it a valuable tool for starting constructive, consistent conversations between home and school. Throughout the year, SchoolTV also hosts free webinars led by experts, offering practical advice on key wellbeing topics relevant to families. We encourage all parents to explore SchoolTV regularly and use it whenever questions or concerns arise.

VIEW THE SCHOOLTV PAGE ON OUR WEBSITE

THIS WEEK'S FEATURE: TRANSITION TO HIGH SCHOOL

This week's featured article and video focus on Transition to High School, presented by Dr Emma Woodward. Dr Woodward shares practical, reassuring strategies to help students settle confidently and successfully into their new environment. We encourage all families especially those new to secondary school or to the College to take a moment to watch and explore this resource.

VIEW THIS WEEK'S FEATURE

Paul Durham • Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care

Term 1 Year 10 Immunisations

Year 10 students will be offered the free Meningococcal ACWY vaccine, which protects against four strains of meningococcal bacteria. Please note that this vaccine does not protect against Meningococcal B. If you would like your teen to receive the Meningococcal B vaccine, it is available through your regular immunisation provider.

A parent/guardian consent card was sent home this week. Please sign and return the card to the school even if you do not consent for your child to be vaccinated at school.

If you misplace the card, you can obtain another copy from the school, or download the Year 10 consent card.

Immunisation Dates: Thursday 26 March & Friday 27 March

School drop-off and pick-up

All parents, or others, who drop-off or pick-up students before and after school are asked to do so on the **Basketball Courts** at each campus. This is to ensure that the safety of students and other road users is maximised at this time.

It is requested that students are not dropped-off or picked-up on the surrounding streets at each campus or in the bus bays. Cars parked on surrounding streets combined with students crossing roads increases the risks of accidents that could potentially be avoided.

Paul Durham • Assistant Principal, Pastoral Care

Information & Notices

Attendance at School - Senior Student Reminders

On 2 February, the College Executive wrote to the community to provide information about the expectations and requirements around attendance at school. Here are some important reminders around attendance, absences, and approved leave in relation to assessment for Senior Students:

YEAR 11/12 - ASSESSMENT

Assessment Alterations (e.g. extensions) can only be applied where an AAA (Assessment Alteration Application) form has been completed and approved. AAA forms for absence can only be approved if the absence is covered by a) approved Campus Head Leave, or b) supporting medical documentation (Doctor, Pharmacy, or Telehealth Certificate) generated on or before the assessment date. When an assessment component is not submitted on the due date, and there is no approved AAA, penalties will apply.

YEAR 11/12 - VOIDING A UNIT

If a student has unjustified absences for 10% of lessons for a subject in a semester they will risk voiding the unit of work and this may impact their capacity to achieve the ATAR and/or a Senior Secondary Certificate.

Unjustified absences include:

- Truancy
- Absences not explained within 10 days
- Undocumented absences (absences not supported by medical documentation or approved leave) in excess of 15 days in a year.

Tristan Burg • Assistant Principal, Academic Care

Unit Outlines and Age Restricted Resources

Unit Outlines for each course will be published on Canvas by the end of Week 2 (Friday 13 February). The Unit Outlines will contain details of the content of each course, the assessments students will undertake, and the due dates. This year, they will also detail what PG-rated film and print resources will be used in the teaching of the unit (for Years 7-10). These resources have been approved by the Faculty Coordinator to be age-appropriate to the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and social development of the students. Should parents wish to discuss the resources, they are welcome to contact the relevant Faculty Coordinator. Any M-rated teaching resources will meet this same criteria, but parents will be contacted separately for the specific parental consent.

Tristan Burg • Assistant Principal, Academic Care

Information & Notices

France Study Tour and Exchange Program

Information Evening

An Information Evening will be held on Wednesday 18 February at 5.00pm in the Sr Noelene Quinane Building Theatre at the St Peter's Campus, for parents of students in Years 9 to 12 interested in attending the Study Tour to France at the end of Term 3.

At 5.30pm there will be a further session for families who are hosting a French student as part of the upcoming Exchange program with our Sister School in France.

Peter Johnson • International Programs Officer

Year 11 Study Day and Year 10 AI Session

On Friday 13 February, all Year 11 students will be participating in a Study Skills Program. This annual event has the students rotate through workshops led by experienced teachers and guest presenters from Elevate Education. They will be provided with information and activities on time management, study skills, AI in the Senior school, careers and vocational pathways, goal setting, and the ACT Education System (BSSS, AST Exams, ATAR, and ACT Senior Secondary Certificate).

On that day, Year 10 will also particiapte in a presentation on AI, the first step in our Senior strategy for teaching students how to effectively integrate AI into their studies. This session will be led by presenters from Elevate Education.

Tristan Burg • Assistant Principal, Academic Care

Padua Homework Club

Padua Campus Homework Club is open Monday to Thursday, from 3.15pm to 4.30pm.

It will be closed on the following dates:

- Tuesday 10 February (Staff Meeting)
- Wednesday 25 February (Swimming Carnival)
- Tuesday 17 March (Staff Meeting)
- Tuesday 24 March (Athletics Carnival)

Amanda Knott • Padua Learning Commons Coordinator

Information & Notices

Duke of Edinburgh's International Award

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award is a global framework for non-formal education that empowers young people aged 14 to 24 to find their purpose, passion and place in the world.

The award provides an internationally recognised certificate by doing the things they love, helping young people grow and improve as individuals and members of society, by participating in a personal selection of three regular sections: Voluntary Service, Physical Recreation and Skills, along with team based Adventurous Journeys. Anyone aged 14 and above is welcome to join at any time throughout the year. Email claire.peck@mackillop.act.edu.au for more information or come along to a weekly meeting.

MEETING TIMES:

- **Padua:** Friday lunchtime, in L1
- **St Peter's:** Monday recess, in IRC4

CONTACT DETAILS:

- **Email:** claire.peck@mackillop.act.edu.au
- **Phone:** (02) 6209 0100

Claire Peck • Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Coordinator

Padua Campus Drama Club

It's a Club for Drama... We play Drama games, and ALL students are welcome. You don't need to be in a Drama class to attend.

When: Wednesdays from 8:20am - 8:50am starting in Week 2.

Permission notes are in the Humanities Staffroom.

Jeremy Margosis • Drama Teacher

MacKillop Mob

All Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students please ensure that you are part of the MacKillop Mob Canvas page to find out about study support times, cultural activities, and other opportunities available here at the College.

SEMESTER 1 STUDENT SUPPORT TIMES:

- **Year 7:** Wednesday B Period 2
- **Year 8:** Thursday A Period 2
- **Year 9:** Thursday A Period 3
- **Year 10:** Wednesday A Period 4
- **Years 11-12:** Wednesday A Period 4, Friday A Periods 1 & 2, Thursday B Periods 3 & 4 and Friday B Periods 3 & 4

Further information about the 'MacKillop Mob' will be sent home to our First Nations parents and carers in the next few weeks.

Jeremy Margosis • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Contact Teacher

Information & Notices

School Fees

Term 1 statements will be issued from 19 February 2026 and fees are due and payable by 13 March 2026 unless there is a direct debit or an approved payment plan in place.

The College offers the following payment methods:

- Direct Debit (weekly, fortnightly, monthly) via bank account or credit card
- BPay
- Cash and Eftpos – in person at front reception at either Campus
- Credit Card via telephone on 6209 5224
- CompassPay through your Compass App

To commence a direct debit please email fees@mackillop.act.edu.au.

Michelle Predovan • Fees Manager

A message from Enrolments

Guardians wishing to update their main mobile telephone number or email may do so directly within the Compass Parent Portal.

Any other amendments to family circumstances, additional telephone numbers or address changes must be submitted to the Enrolments Team in writing by emailing enrolments@mackillop.act.edu.au.

Jo Lubinski & Rebecca McKenzie • Enrolments

Second-Hand Uniform Shop

The SHUS will be open on Tuesdays during the school term by appointment. Please email uniforms@mackillop.act.edu.au for an appointment, or phone/text 0427 089 370.

Judy • SHUS Manager

Community Notices

BRINDABELLA CALISTHENICS

Come and Try Cali Dance with Brindabella Calisthenies College! Cali Dance combines sport and performing arts to create dynamic performances. It builds teamwork, confidence and friendships through music, dance, acting, strength and flexibility. BCC is for everyone and welcomes all ages and abilities!

If you join with us in 2026, you can get a free starter pack and a $100 discount on Term 1 fees. **Come and Try** registrations can be made via email to: secretary@brindabellacc.com.au. Visit the website for more information.

INFORMATION NIGHT: EXPLORING FAITH

Come and find out about a parish formation program designed for those in Years 7 to 12 who have an interest in faith. This program also offers a pathway to receive initiation into the sacraments if desired. The information night will be on Tuesday 17 February at 5:30pm at Holy Family Church Gowrie.

Register here, or if you have any questions email: bernadette.rayner@cg.catholic.edu.au.

What's Coming Up

Senior SRC Induction and Year 12 Badge Presentation **11 FEB**

Year 11 Senior Studies Day **13 FEB**

MON	**09** FEB	• Year 11 Parent Information Session • Year 11 SRC Elections
TUE	**10** FEB	• Year 7 Parent Information Session
WED	**11** FEB	• Senior SRC Induction and Year 12 Badge Presentation
FRI	**13** FEB	• Year 11 Senior Studies Day
WED	**18** FEB	• Year 11 AST Trial • Ash Wednesday Liturgies
THU	**19** FEB	• Year 12 ATAR-Seeker Interviews • Year 12 Careers Presentation (non-ATAR)

What's Coming Up

Opening Mass **20 FEB**

Swimming Carnival **25 FEB**

FRI	**20** FEB	• Opening Mass
MON	**23** FEB	• School Photos (Padua) • Year 11 Cooma Parent Info Session
TUE	**24** FEB	• Honours Assembly (St Peter's)
WED	**25** FEB	• College Swimming Carnival
MON	**02** MAR	• School Photos (St Peter's)
TUE	**03** MAR	• Moderation Day (Pupil-Free Day) • Year 11 AST Trials

MacKillop

St Mary MacKillop College Canberra

Contact details

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PO Box 1211
Tuggeranong ACT 2901

Mackinnon Street, **Wanniassa** (Years 7-9)
Ellerston Avenue, **Isabella Plains** (Years 10-12)

Absentee SMS Line
0429 131 463

Socials

www.facebook.com/
mackillop.act

www.instagram.com/
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www.youtube.com/
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www.linkedin.com/company/
st-mary-mackillop-college-canberra

https://bsky.app/profile/
mackillop-act.bsky.social

Do you need help with a particular issue?

IT Support, Compass and Canvas	helpdesk@mackillop.act.edu.au
Enrolments	enrolments@mackillop.act.edu.au
Fees and Finance	fees@mackillop.act.edu.au
School Reports	reports@mackillop.act.edu.au