



PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK 2024

FROM THE PRINCIPAL



St Mary's Primary School has been providing quality, Catholic education for the Maryborough District for over 120 years. Our proud history began when the Sisters of St Joseph established the first convent school in 1870. After the Josephites withdrawal, the Sisters of Mercy took up residency and in 1890 moved the school to the current site of St Mary's Primary. In 1977 St Mary's Primary, originally an all-girls school, amalgamated with the Christian Brothers to form a co-educational school.

St Mary's is a Catholic Parish School and as such, we are committed to providing quality, inclusive education in the Catholic tradition. A very important aspect of Catholic education is the establishment of a caring and welcoming environment in which parents and the school enters into a partnership of educating the children in our care.

At St Mary's Primary School, we believe that each child is unique in the sight of God. Our aim is to work with parents to provide the best possible education for their child. We endeavour to make your child's schooling a happy experience; one where we continue to teach and reinforce the values you share at home. St Mary's Primary School is proud of its commitment to academic excellence but we are equally proud of the way we provide for the spiritual, emotional and social development of each child.

We hope that your experience of our school community is a positive and rewarding one.

Should you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Mrs Michelle White

Principal

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page	Contents
4	School Prayer
4	School Directory
5	School Term Dates
5	Attendance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Punctuality • Early Arrivals • After School • After School Care
6	Communication Between Home and School <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes to Parents • School Newsletter • School Records • Absenteeism • Telephone Calls • Appointments with Teachers • Custody Matters • Dealing with Difficulties, Problems and Concerns • Parent Portal • BCE Connect App • Facebook
9	The School Curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religious Education • Health and Physical Education • Sports Houses • Information and Communications Technology • The Arts • Homework • Assessment and Reporting
12	Children with Special Education Needs
13	Camps and Excursions
13	Library
13	Health and Safety
16	Traffic
17	General Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Board • Parents and Friends • Tuckshop • Lost Property • Book Club

SCHOOL PRAYER

This is our school, let peace be found here.
 May the rooms be full of happiness and love for one another.
 Let peace be the way as we live and work today.
 Yes Lord, a blessing we ask today.

SCHOOL DIRECTORY

ST MARY'S PRIMARY SCHOOL	
167 John Street, Maryborough QLD 4650	
Telephone: (07) 4121 5705	
Email: pmaryborough@bne.catholic.edu.au	
Tuckshop Telephone: (07) 4123 5369	
ADMINISTRATION	
Principal	Mrs Michelle White
Assistant Principal (Religious Education)	Mrs Stephani Barnes
Head of Curriculum	Mr Paul Heffernan
Secretary (Administration)	Mrs Katie Neilsen, Mrs Rebecca Mayes and Mrs Kelly Byrnes
Financial Secretary	Mr Jason Neale
Guidance Counsellor	Mrs Amy Sands
Support Teacher Inclusive Education	Mrs Emma Putney
PARENTS & FRIENDS (P & F)	
C/- 167 John Street, Maryborough QLD 4650	
President	Mrs Amanda Campbell
Vice-President	Mrs Kate Grohn
Secretary	Mr Isaac Schmidt
Treasurer	Mr Adrian Massingham
SCHOOL BOARD	
The school board comprises of the Principals of both St Mary's schools, Parish Priest and parent and staff representatives	
Telephone: (07) 4121 5705	
Email: pmaryborough@bne.catholic.edu.au	
ST MARY'S COLLEGE	
51 Lennox Street, Maryborough QLD 4650	
Email: smaryborough@bne.catholic.edu.au	
Telephone: (07) 4121 2650	
MARYBOROUGH PARISH OFFICE	
269 Adelaide Street, Maryborough QLD 4650	
Telephone: (07) 4121 3701	
Email: maryborough@bne.catholic.net.au	
Parish Priest: Fr Lucius Edombi	

SCHOOL TERM DATES

Term 1	23 rd January – 28 th March
Term 2	15 th April – 21 st June
Term 3	8 th July – 13 th September
Term 4	30 th September – 6 th December

ATTENDANCE

TIMETABLE FOR THE SCHOOL DAY:

First Bell	8:35 am
School Starts	8:40 am
Morning Tea	10:45 am to 11:15 am
Lunch	1:15 pm to 1:45 pm
School Finishes	3:00 pm

PUNCTUALITY

All children are normally expected to be in attendance with their class at the beginning of the school day. Consistent late arrival causes unnecessary disruption to school organisation and to the flow of lessons, especially with Literacy and Numeracy, which constitute the first lesson of the day in most classes.

All late arrivals must sign into the office with a parent or carer

&

All early departures must be signed out by a parent or carer

EARLY ARRIVALS

Children should not enter the school grounds prior to 8:15 am each morning. Prior to this time there will be no supervision available. Upon arrival, P-2 students should make their way to the library undercover area and 3-6 students should gather in the Jack McKay Hall.

AFTER SCHOOL

Normally all children are expected to be clear of the grounds by 3:20 pm each day. Supervision cannot be provided past this time.

If you are delayed through unforeseen circumstances, please contact the school office so that arrangements can be made for the supervision of your children.

COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

NOTES TO PARENTS

Accounts are sent each term via email. Permission slips and other information will be sent via email.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Our school newsletter is published regularly and emailed to parents. Alternatively, parents can access our newsletter via the Parent Portal.

SCHOOL RECORDS

It is important that the administration retains up to date records of each family in the school. Therefore, we ask that the school office be informed of any variation in any of the information we have on record - preferably via the Parent Portal or BCE Connect mobile app. In particular, the following variations should be notified:

- Change of address or telephone contact numbers
- Change of emergency contacts
- Serious health conditions

ABSENTEEISM

If your child is absent from school for any reason, please contact the office to let them know as a matter of duty of care. The school monitors all student absences and may make contact with families if a child has been absent for more than 3 consecutive days without an excuse.

You can also log a student absence via the Parent Portal or BCE Connect mobile app.

TELEPHONE CALLS

Please note that routine calls to teachers should be restricted to out of class times as teachers will not be called away from their classes to answer the telephone. Children do not have access to the school phone. Messages for children will be taken in emergency situations only.

PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal is our school's main channel of communication to parents. It will keep you up-to-date with happenings in the school, forms that need to be returned, names and contact details of staff members, policy information and more. Parents are also able to check and update their details via the 'My Details' section. 'My Students' provides parents with the ability to peruse data related to their child. They can view a list of subjects, a visual timetable, attendance records and NAPLAN records.

BCE CONNECT APP



The BCE Connect App gives parents access to the Parent Portal via the use of an app on your mobile phone. Parents will use their existing Parent Portal login credentials to access secure data drawn directly from the Parent Portal. They will be able to:

- Log student absences
- Receive announcement alerts
- Access events on the school calendar and save to their device
- Easily access newsletters, tuckshop information, class events and more
- Access and download documents and forms

BCE Connect, is now available to download from:

- [Google play store](#)
- Apple App Store - [iPhone link](#) and [iPad link](#)

FACEBOOK



Facebook is used in an informal way in which the school can connect with the broader community. Our aim is to give families an insight into the everyday life of students at our school.

APPOINTMENTS WITH TEACHERS

Parents are encouraged to maintain contact with class teachers for the purpose of discussing their child's progress. Teachers should be given sufficient time to prepare for interviews to make them as productive as possible and so that supervision arrangements can be made for the remainder of their class where this is required. Consideration should be given to minimising disruption to core teaching time by seeking appointments outside class times. Appointments with the teaching staff may be obtained directly by emailing a meeting request to the teacher.

CUSTODY MATTERS

When the school is given proof that custody of a child rests with one parent, or a particular person, only, the school will do all in its power to ensure that parent's or person's rights are met. Parents of guardians should advise the school in writing if permission is given for the child to be collected by someone other than the person who has legal custody of the child. ***The school office should be notified promptly in all cases of changes lawful custody of children.***

DEALING WITH DIFFICULTIES, PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

Because we care for each student in our school and we believe that open and honest communication between parents and teachers is of the utmost importance, we seek to take proactive action to affect a satisfactory solution to any difficulties that may occur from time to time.

When parents or guardians are concerned about an issue regarding their child, they should, as soon as possible, **contact their child's teacher to make a suitable time to discuss their concerns**. It is recognised that in the case of very serious allegations (e.g. those of a criminal or professionally negligent nature) these should be directed in the first instance to the Principal.

Should parents or guardians feel their concerns have not been addressed, they are encouraged to contact the Principal to discuss their concerns.

The outcome of the discussion between the parents or guardians and the Principal may include the following actions:

- the Principal referring the parents back to the teacher for further discussion
- the Principal meeting with the teacher to discuss the parent/guardian concerns
- the Principal convening a meeting of the parties to seek resolution of the concerns

Parents or guardians are welcome to take their concerns further by expressing them in a written format to the Principal who will give a copy of such letter to the teacher. The Principal will make a reply to such a letter as soon as possible. The Principal may also notify the Area Supervisor from Brisbane Catholic Education of the parent's/guardian's concern.

If parents or guardians still have concerns, they are able to contact the Area Supervisor at Brisbane Catholic Education directly.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Queensland Studies Authority and ACARA determine the Curriculum that is required to be taught in all Queensland schools. As such, the QSA and ACARA curriculum documents form the basis of all the secular subjects taught at St Mary's School. The following **LEARNING AREAS (LAs)** are addressed throughout the school:

- Religious Education
- English
- Mathematics
- History
- Science
- Geography
- Technology
- The Arts
- Music
- Health and Physical Education
- Japanese

Where practicable, an integrated approach is used across the learning areas. Teachers undertake co-operative planning where this is of benefit to the child.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Home and the family are the first environments where children take their initial steps in their life long Faith journey. The role of St Mary's Catholic Primary School is to support parents and families and the parish in the responsibility for passing on the Faith to their children. Parent participation in all aspects of the School's Religious Education Program is encouraged.

The Religious Education Curriculum, approved by the Archdiocese of Brisbane, provide the basis for the teaching of Religion in the school. These guidelines are supplemented with a variety of programs and resource materials. The Religious Education Curriculum seeks to provide a range of graded activities so that the children may experience Catholic Christian beliefs and values as they are lived out within the daily community life of the school. Education for justice and peace, personal development, care of the needy, pastoral care, prayer, liturgy and the Sacraments are associated elements of our Education in Faith program.

Prayer and Liturgy

Children in all year levels are given opportunities to experience class prayer and liturgy regularly throughout the year at their level of readiness and understanding. Class Liturgies are conducted weekly on Fridays by roster. Whole school Liturgy occurs at the beginning and ending of the school year and at special times throughout the school year. All parents are invited to take part in class and school assemblies, prayer gatherings and liturgies.

Sacraments

Preparation for the first reception of the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation occurs as part of a Parish based program with the school acting, through its curriculum, in a supporting capacity. Enquiries concerning Sacramental preparation should be referred to the Parish Office. Each year, grades 4 to 6 have an opportunity to attend a second rite of reconciliation. These liturgies are prepared as part of the class religious education program but are celebrated in the evening in the parish church.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All children are encouraged to participate in sporting activities while at school.

Years Prep to 6 undertake structured physical education programs that promotes Co-ordination, fitness, individual and team skills and formal games.

Swimming lessons are conducted as part of the Health and Physical Education program at the city pool. Availability of pool time determines which classes attend lessons. The purpose of school swimming lessons is for water safety and water confidence. For this reason, it is necessary that all children attend swimming lessons unless prevented due to a medical condition.

Mr Stuart McKinnon co-ordinates the school's intra and inter-school sport activities. Children are placed in four sports houses and remain in those houses during their time at St Mary's.

During the year our Year 5 and 6 classes participate in Gala Sports Days organised by the Maryborough District Sports Association. A variety of winter and summer sports are played.



SPORTS HOUSES		
House	Colour	History
McKay	Green	Mr Jack McKay was the first Lay Principal of St Mary's Primary School, serving between 1978 and 1993.
Mackillop	Yellow	Blessed Mary Mackillop is recognized as Australia's first Saint. She founded the Sisters of St Joseph who featured prominently in the early history of Catholic Education in Maryborough, between 1870 and 1879.
Tissot	Red	Fr Paul Tissot was the first Parish Priest of St Mary's Parish, Maryborough, serving from 1861 to 1875.
McAuley	Blue	Catherine McAuley, an heiress of 50 years of age, founded the Sisters of Mercy as a Catholic Religious Order in Dublin in 1831.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

Our school aims to expose students to a variety of technologies as part of their development as life-long learners. To this end a strategic plan is in place to address technology related in all areas of school life. Students have access to computers and each classroom has a large whiteboard. ICT is integrated in most Learning Areas.

THE ARTS



Children in all year levels participate in a variety of art and craft related activities throughout the year in accordance with their age and abilities. **Mrs Chrissy Holz** works with children in all year levels on the various strands of the Arts Curriculum.

In years 2 to 6 instrumental music instruction in strings, brass, woodwind and percussion is available. Children in these classes are also able to participate in St Mary's School Band and Ensemble programs. The instrumental music program allows children to be exposed to a variety of band instruments as well as the opportunity to play these to performance standard. An extra cost is involved

when children participate in the instrumental music program. Details concerning the instrumental music program are available from Mrs Rosi Livingstone.

St Mary's also offers a junior and senior choir program.

St Mary's students perform in our local eisteddfod each year both individually and with school groups in singing, music and verse.

Arts Council and similar performances visit our school at various times throughout the year.

HOMEWORK

The school's policy is that homework be given. However, teachers can design homework tasks that reflect the children's needs in their classes. Normally teachers will outline their homework procedures at their Parent/Teacher Information Night held at the beginning of each year. At other times parents should consult their child's teacher to familiarise themselves with the procedure in each class. Parents are expected to support teachers in their supervision of homework.

Reading is an essential activity for the promotion of positive learning, and it is expected that every child will read for a short time every night.

ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

In the first few weeks of the school year Parent Information Nights are held for each class for the purpose of acquainting Parents with Teachers' expectations for the coming year and to assist in the opening of positive communication channels between school and home. At least one Parent or Guardian is strongly urged to attend these meetings.

It is our policy that children's development and progress is assessed continuously throughout the year. A variety of methods of assessment are employed, including:

- Anecdotal records
- Checklists
- Work sampling
- Observation
- Conferencing
- Written and oral testing

As difficulties arise every attempt will be made to bring these to your attention as soon as possible.

Written progress reports are provided at the end of each semester. Parents and carers are offered two parent teacher interviews throughout the year least one of the child's parents or guardians should attend a Parent/Teacher conference for reporting purposes. An opportunity for a second interview in semester 2 will also be offered.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Participation in the Curriculum

It is an expectation of the school that students participate fully in the curriculum offered by the school. From time to time it will, however, be necessary for the curriculum to be modified in order to accommodate the particular needs of students. A procedure is employed for identifying and assessing the needs of students that may necessitate the modification of the curriculum. Further information may be obtained from the Student Support Team.

Student Support Team

The role of the Student Support Team is to provide quality intervention and teaching and learning outcomes for all students, especially those referred for support because of special learning needs. The team is comprised of the Principal, the Student Support – Inclusive Education teacher, Guidance Counsellor, class teachers and school officers. At times, parents and external professional consultants may also be invited to attend these meetings. Meetings are held regularly to address the needs of all students referred to the team.

CAMPS AND EXCURSIONS

EXCURSIONS

From time to time, excursions to places or events of educational interest will be undertaken. For local visits that do not require bus travel, permission is obtained when parents sign the general consent form. For all other excursions parents will be advised when visits are to occur and a separate consent form will be emailed home for completion. No child will be allowed to go on an excursion without the written approval of parents or guardians.

SCHOOL CAMPS

School Camps are an important learning and socialising experience and are part of our school curriculum for Years 5 & 6. Camp is not meant to be a holiday but an extension of the classroom into a different learning environment.

The teachers will advise you regarding the timing and planning of the camps as soon as this information is available. Such advice will explain the venue, nature and objectives of the camp, transport arrangements, clothing and other requirements.

Since learning experiences from the camp are often integrated into the school program, children may be disadvantaged by not attending camp. Parents experiencing difficulty in regard to the camp are asked to contact the Principal.

LIBRARY

The School library is well-stocked, interesting and a useful resource in our school. The aim of our library is to encourage in the children a love of learning and reading. As well as during class time the library is open most lunchtimes for student use. The use of a library bag is necessary for the protection of books. All children borrowing from the library must have a library bag.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

HEALTH RECORDS

At the beginning of each school year, it is important that parents inform the school of any changes to children's health records, emergency contacts etc. Please keep us informed of any changes as they occur. In the event of an emergency or accident the decisions we make will depend upon the information that you have provided.

SICK CHILDREN

A school is a working organisation. It is unfair to both children and their teachers if children are sent to school unwell. Sick children belong at home. The school has neither the staff nor the resources to care for sick children and it is the practice of our school that sick children are sent home. Please assist us in this matter by collecting sick children promptly.

INJURED CHILDREN

When a child is injured at school every care will be taken to ensure the child's safety. The normal procedure will be:

1. Basic first aid will be administered to minor injuries.
2. In more serious cases the school will endeavour to notify the child's parents/guardian and seek their advice.
3. If the parents/guardians cannot be contacted or the situation warrants it, the Principal will take whatever action he deems necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the child, e.g. call an ambulance or take the child immediately to a doctor, dentist or the hospital.

MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

Where children are required to take medication at school (including "Panadol") a "**Letter of Authorization**" needs to be sent to the school containing details of dosage, time etc. and granting permission for the dose to be administered. **The Letter of Authorisation is available from the school office and also from the Parent Portal.** All medication must be in a container labelled by a pharmacist/ dispenser, showing the name of the drug, the "use by" date, the name of the student's medical practitioner, the name of the student, the dosage and the frequency of administration.

Medication cannot be administered if these procedures are not met.

Please note:

- **Supervision of administration of medication at school will not be undertaken unless the required written authority is supplied by the child's parents/guardians.**
- **The school will not administer the first dose of any medication to any child.**

PERMISSION SLIPS

Parents will be required to sign permission forms for any excursion or event that requires your child/children to leave the school grounds e.g. Mass at church, swimming and eisteddfods. These forms will be emailed to parents/carers as digital slips.

HEALTH AND DENTAL CARE

The School Dental Service visits the school every two years. This service is provided free of charge to school children. Parental permission is sought before any treatment is carried out.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

An emergency evacuation plan is in place throughout the school and children informed of the correct procedure. A copy of the plan is available on request.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

All visitors to the school, including parents are to report to the school office to sign in before proceeding to classrooms or to the playground.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The following Health Department Information is provided for your information and guidance:

DISEASE	PERIOD OF EXCLUSION FOR SUFFERERS
CHICKEN POX	Should be excluded for 5 days after the beginning of the illness or until all blisters have dried
DIARRHOEA &/or VOMITING	Exclude until feeling well and no vomiting or loose bowel motions for 24 hours
MEASLES and RUBELLA (German measles)	Should be excluded for at least 4 days from the appearance of the rash or until a medical certificate of recovery is furnished.
RINGWORM and IMPETIGO (school sores)	Exclude until 24 hours after treatment has started. Sores must be suitably covered.
CONJUNCTIVITIS	Excluded until discharge from eyes has ceased unless a doctor has diagnosed non-infectious conjunctivitis

HEAD LICE

Head lice are a common problem in schools. Head lice infestation is not necessarily a sign of poor hygiene. They are often found in hair that is washed frequently.

Preventative measures include avoiding the sharing of combs and hats, and by having long hair tied back. **Above all, if we are to contain the problem of head lice in our school all parents need to exercise vigilance.** Check your children's hair regularly for signs of infestation.

When/if infestation is found consult a pharmacist regarding suitable preparations and other measures for dealing with the problem. Once an infestation is treated it is important to follow up with inspections and, if necessary, re-treatment every few days to ensure that the hair is rid of all eggs and lice.

All infestations of head lice should be reported to the school so that others can be warned. As lice can spread very rapidly, affected children are to be treated before returning to school. If a lice infestation is discovered at school, the child will be sent home immediately for treatment. Students may return to school the day after their hair has been treated.

TRAFFIC

PARKING

Parking is a constant issue around our school, especially in the afternoon between 2:30 and 3:10 pm when children are being collected from school. In the interests of safety, all parents are asked to take note of the restrictions that apply to parking around the school and to observe them for the safety of the children. Generally these are as follows:

Location	Procedure
John Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ No standing or parking in the bus stop between the school gate and the corner of John and Walker Streets.■ No standing or parking around the school crossing.■ Parking in the loading zone between the crossing and Sussex St is limited to 5 minutes.
Lennox Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Stop, Drop & Go in designated area and 5 minute parking between this and Sussex St from 8am to 4pm on school days■ Brolga Theatre carpark is available for drop off and pick up parking.
Walker Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Parking in the loading zone adjacent to the school gate and the crossing is limited to 5 minutes.■ No parking in the car park of the White Lion Hotel (Private Property).
School Grounds	Parents' and visitor's vehicles are not permitted in the school grounds at any time without the express permission of the Principal.

SCHOOL CROSSINGS

In general, the streets around the school are quite busy most of the time and are therefore dangerous for children. In the interests of safety, **parents should not call children across roads at any point away from a recognised crossing**. These are listed below:

Supervised Crossings

John Street, adjacent to the school gate

Traffic Lights - Intersection of John and Walker Streets, and Walker and Lennox Streets

GENERAL INFORMATION

SCHOOL BOARD

The St Mary's Catholic Primary School Board is a pastoral board responsible for policy development and future planning at the School. While the School Board formulates policy, the Principal and staff are responsible for the implementation plans and regulations that accompany it.

In addition to policymaking, the Board concerns itself with the provision and maintenance of school buildings and plant, budgeting, communication and curriculum and has an advisory role in the area of staffing.

The Board represents a structure for achieving co-responsibility in furthering the Church's educational mission. It provides a pastoral structure and process for organized co-operation and teamwork in the ministry of Catholic Education.

Board meetings are conducted at school at least 8 times per year.

PARENTS AND FRIENDS ASSOCIATION (P&F)

We are fortunate to enjoy the support of an active P&F Association. The P&F meets each month during the school year. The Association acts as the peak parent body in our school on all matters concerning Catholic Education and the resourcing of our school. All parents are encouraged to support the school through active membership of the P&F.

TUCKSHOP

The tuckshop is run by the school and staffed by a paid convener, **Miss Tammie Bayliss**, a paid assistant **Mrs Trish O'Farrell**, and volunteers from the parent body. The tuckshop operates Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

All parents are encouraged to play an active role in supporting tuckshop operations. If you are interested in volunteering in the tuckshop, please contact Tammie on her mobile – 0408 150 514.

LOST PROPERTY

All items of property belonging to the children should be clearly marked with the child's full name. This makes it easier to return lost items to their rightful owner. All unmarked items of lost property are placed in the lost property 'bin', which is located in the **office** in the **Convent Building**. Items unclaimed at the end of each term will be disposed of.

BOOK CLUB

St Mary's supports the operation of the Scholastic Book Club in an effort to promote a love of reading and good literature among students. Catalogues, prices lists and order forms are distributed to students and are obligation free. Scholastic Book Club can be ordered through the Scholastic LOOP system. Books are available to students usually within a couple of weeks. Enquiries can be made at the library.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

All school policies and procedures can be located on the Parent Portal in the tile named 'Forms, Documents and Policies'.