



Newsletter Term 3 > Week 2, 2025

Important Dates

Bosco Photo Day

Wednesday 6 August 2025

Benedict Photo Day

Thursday 7 August 2025

31.07.25

Principal's Update

Welcome to Term 3

It is with great joy that we welcome 26 new Reception students to our Catholic school community this term. Their energy, curiosity, and wonder bring a renewed sense of purpose to our mission of nurturing faith, learning, and belonging. We also extend a warm welcome to all new students, families and staff who have joined our community in the last couple of weeks.

I am delighted to welcome Mrs Melissa Canil, who joins us as Deputy Principal for the remainder of the year. Melissa has already received a warm and generous welcome from students, staff, and families, and we are grateful for the spirit of hospitality that defines our community. Over the next few weeks, we will begin the recruitment process for a Deputy Principal for Benedict campus, and I thank parents and staff for contributing to the consultation process this week.

We also welcomed a number of new staff to our College community. Miss Alana Zubrinich, Miss Lauren Farinola and Ms Connie Hallett-Patterson have joined our teaching team at Benedict, in Reception White, 1 Yellow and Reception Yellow respectively. Our ESO team has welcomed Miss Grace Frick at Bosco and Mrs Courtney McCarthy, Miss Tilly Jacka and Miss Hailey Shephard at Benedict. We also

welcome Mrs Rachael Kirchner to the Administration Office at Benedict.

From Sunday to Tuesday, I had the privilege of working alongside my fellow principals and CESA colleagues from the Diocese of Port Pirie at a Forum in the Forest. If a little chilly, Bundaleer was an excellent place to gather and sharpen our focus on Faith, Excellence, and Growth in our Catholic schools. Our shared commitment to equity and excellence was at the heart of our reflections and planning, and at St Mark's we are committed to deepening our practices to ensure ongoing improvement in learning and wellbeing outcomes for our students.

This term began with a strong focus on professional growth. I would like to congratulate our dedicated staff for their enthusiastic engagement in our recent professional learning session on differentiation, led by Dr Tom Porta. His insights have sparked meaningful conversations and practical strategies that will continue to shape inclusive and responsive teaching across our classrooms.

NAPLAN

This week, individual student reports for NAPLAN have been sent home for students in Year 3, Year 5, Year 7 and Year 9.

The reports indicate the level of proficiency in five domains: Reading, Writing, Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation, and Numeracy.

Participation in NAPLAN tests remains high, and we are pleased to see a growth in the number of students demonstrating proficiency - Strong and Exceeding. Our work on Numeracy is showing very pleasing outcomes.

NAPLAN results provide one snapshot of achievement and should be considered in the context of attendance, school assessment and teacher feedback. If you have any questions about your child's results, please contact the class or subject teacher for further discussion about how we can work together, at school and at home, to support further growth.

Fr Dennis Handley Cup

Thank you to our students who proudly represented the College in the Fr Dennis Handley Cup this week. This event is more than a competition and a tradition - it's a celebration of school spirit, teamwork, and pride. While winning is always exciting, it is the courage to participate, the joy of collaboration, and the respect shown on and off the field that truly reflect our values.

On a personal note, I will be taking leave for the next two weeks as I return to the UK unexpectedly for my mother's funeral. I am deeply grateful for the support, compassion, and prayers extended to me and my family during this time. I extend sincere thanks to Mrs Katie Pole who will be Acting Principal in my absence.

Warm regards,

Dr Sandra Hewson, Principal



31.07.25

Faith and Mission

Year 10 Retreat

Today, the Year 10s embarked on an experience charting their pathways through life, where they have come from to this point, and where they see themselves journeying from here into the future. Reflecting the various aspects of attitude and habits we can acquire to be successful in this journey, the day culminated with an afternoon walk from our venue at the Crystal Brook Football Club, to the Crystal Brook Catholic Church. It was a time of contemplation about our experiences and the presence of Jesus as a companion on this journey. In essence, we do not make this journey on our own, but also in the presence of others. The choices we make and the support we give each other shape the pathway we have before us. In this Jubilee Year, we are reminded of the spiritual pilgrimage we make through life to better connect with creation and our creator.

Many thanks to the people who made this day possible, and especially the accompanying teaching staff who organised and facilitated the morning sessions for reflection, creation, acting, and listening, which set up the theme of 'Paths of Life' for our Year 10 students.

Project Compassion, thank you from Caritas Australia

In recognition of our fundraising efforts for Project Compassion through the Lenten Season, we have been presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from Caritas Australia. This recognises the amazing efforts by our students, staff and wider community to contribute to the outreach programmes across the world that are helping our neighbours in need.

A reminder of the work that Project Compassion does and a thank you from Caritas Australia can be found in this YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/XbSL0RFEVXQ>

Operation Christmas Child

Each year, the school participates in "Operation Christmas Child". This is a great cause where we fill shoebox-sized boxes with items for those less fortunate than ourselves. These boxes are sent far and wide to those in need. Each class is asked to try to fill two boxes.

The students are learning about this in class. Your child's class will decide which age group they are catering for.

Please check the list below for suggested items. Please note that all items donated need to be new and small enough to fit in a shoebox.

Items that CAN be placed in the shoe boxes are:

- Stationery items – Pens, pencils, crayons, stickers, note pads, pencil case, etc.
- Toys – soft toys, yo-yos, tennis balls, finger puppets, jigsaws, trucks, cars, small musical instruments.
- Hygiene – toothbrush, comb, hairbrush, hair clips/ties, flannels.
- Clothing – socks, underwear, bracelets, beanies, caps, gloves, sunglasses.

Items that CANNOT be placed in the shoe boxes are: liquid items or items containing liquid, plants/seeds, food items, medicines, any form of soap, second-hand clothing, fragile or breakable items (e.g. glass or mirrors), anything sharp, war items, anything that may be racially, politically or religiously offensive, novels.

We ask that all donated items be at school by Friday 5 September. We thank you for your support of this worthy cause.

The Witness

[Click here](#) for the latest edition.

Southern Cross

[Click here](#) for the latest edition.

Mr Isaac Ellis, APRIM

31.07.25

School Photos



SCHOOL PHOTOS ARE NEXT WEEK
to order visit Advanced Life website
(use code RE8 JJD 5N9)

Next week our annual school photos will be taken:

- **Bosco Campus-** Wednesday 6 August
- **Benedict Campus-** Thursday 7 August

We remind all students of the importance of meeting College expectations by being present in correct St Mark's College winter uniform, see our [Uniform Guidelines here](#).

Students not meeting the Uniform Guidelines will be asked to make adjustments to ensure consistency, belonging and pride in our presentation.

For those who have not yet received their College jacket order, please speak with your Homegroup or Classroom teacher about wearing the approved navy jumper as an alternative.

Let's work together to ensure our school photos reflect the unity and spirit of our College community.

View this article online to read more

31.07.25

Benedict Campus Reminders

Key Dates: Term 3, Week 3 and 4

- **Net Set Go End of Season Event**
Sunday 3 August, 11.00am – 12.30pm
- **Little Lions Session 2 (Monday Group)**
Monday 4 August, 8.30am – 11.30am
- **Mini Mark's Playgroup – McNally Farm Visit**
Tuesday 5 August, 8.45am – 10.15am
Please bring a warm coat and boots!
- **Benedict Photo Day**
Thursday 7 August
Order your photo package, visit: www.advancedlife.com.au and enter code: RE8 JJD 5N9
- **Interschool Summer Carnival- Years 5 and 6**
Friday 8 August
- **Little Lions Session 3 (Friday Group)**
Friday 8 August, 8.30am – 11.30am
- **Little Lions Session 3 (Monday Group)**
Monday 11 August, 8.30am – 11.30am
- **SAPSASA Soccer**
Monday 11 – Wednesday 13 August
- **Mini Mark's Playgroup – Dino Discovery Day**
Tuesday 12 August, 8.45am – 10.15am
- **Benedict Parent Teacher Interviews (Optional)**
Tuesday 12 August
More information to be provided on Operoo
- **R-12 Mass celebrating the Feast of the Assumption and Feast of Don Bosco**
Friday 15 August, St Mark's Sports Centre

Welcome to Term 3!

It is with great joy that I write my first newsletter article as Acting Deputy Principal of St Mark's College.

I come to Port Pirie from Adelaide, where I live with my husband and two teenage boys. Most recently, I was the APRIM at St Francis of Assisi School in Newton. While it's always a big step to leave the familiar, I have felt incredibly welcomed by the students, staff and

families at St Mark's.

There is something truly special about being part of a country school. The warmth, the genuine connections, and the deep sense of community are unlike anything I've experienced in the city. St Mark's has a unique culture where everyone looks out for each other, supports one another and takes pride in being part of something bigger. It's been such a privilege to step into this environment and I already feel very much at home.

This term, we were delighted to welcome 26 new Reception students and 4 new students across other year levels. To all of our new families joining the St Mark's community - we warmly welcome you and look forward to walking alongside you on this journey.

I am thoroughly enjoying getting to know everyone and experiencing the culture of learning and care that runs through the College. From classroom visits to conversations in the yard, I have already seen so many moments of excellence, kindness, and pride in our school.

I look forward to working in partnership with you all as we continue to support the growth and wellbeing of every student at St Mark's. Please feel free to come and have a chat or introduce yourself if you see me in the yard. I look forward to getting to know all of you.

With gratitude and warmest wishes,

Mrs Melissa Canil, Acting Deputy Principal, Benedict Campus

Little Lions' First Day

On Friday 25 July and Monday 28 July, we were delighted to welcome 33 Little Lions. Amongst a few tears, this cohort of pre-Receptions were so brave and resilient, keen to attend their 'big' school and begin preparing for schooling after kindergarten.

They impressed Mrs Porta and Ms Gadaleta very much, showing excellent listening skills, enthusiasm for new activities and friendliness.

The Year 5 Buddies from 5 Blue and 5 Gold were a big hit! They offered a welcoming smile and a supportive hand to the Little Lions.

By all accounts, the Little Lions are looking forward to Session 2.

Ms Melissa Gadaleta, Little Lions Coordinator

What's been happening at Benedict Campus?

There's been plenty happening at Benedict Campus during Week 1 and 2...





31.07.25

Bosco Campus Reminders

Key Dates: Term 3, Week 3 and 4

Bosco Photo Day

Wednesday 6 August

(Sibling Photos for those with a younger brother or sister at Benedict will be Thursday 7 August)

Order your photo package, visit: www.advancedlife.com.au and enter code: RE8 JJD 5N9

P.A.R.T.Y. Program

Tuesday 12 August

2026 Year 11 and 12 students Career Counselling

Wednesday 13 August, 2.00pm – 6.00pm

Thursday 14 August, 2.00pm – 6.00pm

Bosco Library

R-12 Mass celebrating the Feast of the Assumption and Feast of Don Bosco

Friday 15 August, St Mark's Sports Centre

Copper Coast Show Competition

Friday 15 August

Exploring Futures: Subject Expo inspires Year 10 and 11 Students

On Wednesday morning, our Senior Years Learning Team facilitated a Subject Expo, this informative event was designed to support our Year 10 and 11 students as they begin to plan out their academic and career future pathways. The Subject Expo aimed to help students discover passions, explore possibilities, and build confidence in their subject choices.

The Expo brought together subject teachers, pathway coordinators, and career counsellors to provide students with a comprehensive overview of the subjects available in the senior years.

With interactive displays, one-on-one conversations, and tailored advice, students were encouraged to explore their interests, ask questions, and consider how their strengths align with the subject offerings.

This session will lead into career counselling sessions, where students will receive guidance to help them make informed decisions about 2026. By identifying individual strengths and preferred career pathways, students will be empowered to choose subjects that align with their interests and support their long-term goals.

We look forward to supporting each student as they take the next steps in their learning and career planning journey.

Dennis Handley Cup

St Mark's College proudly welcomed Xavier College back to Port Pirie for the annual Fr Dennis Handley Cup—a spirited celebration of sport, community, and the enduring Salesian tradition.

This special event honours the legacy of Fr Dennis Handley, a visionary educator and compassionate leader who served as Principal of both St Mark's and Xavier College. His deep commitment to young people and belief in the power of play to build character and connection lives on through this competition.

With students competing in football, netball, soccer, and hockey, the day was filled with courage, integrity, and joy. We thank all athletes, staff, volunteers, and families for embracing the Salesian spirit and making this event a true reflection of respect, teamwork, and community.

St Mark's were excited to take the win and keep the cup at the College for another year! [ðŸŒŸ] Match results were as follows:

- Year 7 - 9 Football: St Mark's 59 defeated Xavier 48
- Year 10 - 12 Football: Xavier 66 defeated St Mark's 30
- Open Hockey: Xavier 4 defeated St Mark's 0
- Open Soccer: Xavier 6 defeated St Mark's 1
- Year 7 Netball: St Mark's 46 defeated Xavier 4
- Year 8 Netball: St Mark's 50 defeated Xavier 10
- Year 9 Netball: St Mark's 28 defeated Xavier 18
- Year 10 Netball: St Mark's 32 defeated Xavier 17
- Year 11 Netball: St Mark's 34 defeated Xavier 29
- Year 12 Netball: Xavier 37 defeated St Mark's 27

Congratulations to our students who were awarded Best on Ground:

- Ashton, Year 7 - 9 Football
- Lexie, Year 7 Netball
- Lexi, Year 8 Netball
- Lily, Year 10 Netball

- Lili, Year 11 Netball

Student Achievements

It is lovely when we can celebrate the outstanding achievements of our St Mark's College students in recent weeks.

Congratulations to Ryleigh Nielsen, recipient of the Port Pirie Regional Council NAIDOC Week Sportsperson Award.

Best wishes to Gilbert Hansen and Jaspa Barnes as they travel to represent our College in State Football in Maroochydore next week and to Hamish Webb who will be representing South Australia in the Hockey.

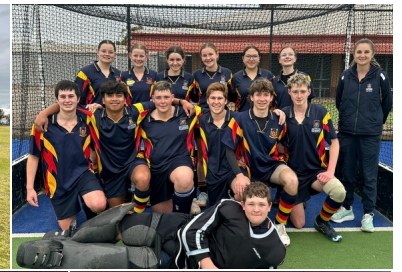
We also congratulate Jackson Smallacombe, winner of the prestigious RSL Bursary, awarded for his commitment to service and academic excellence.

Mrs Katie Pole, Deputy Principal, Bosco Campus

What's been happening at Bosco Campus?

There's been plenty happening at Bosco Campus during Week 1 and 2...





Philippines Immersion

A Journey of Connection, Faith, Formation and Fun

From 5–16 July, sixteen students accompanied by Mrs Pole, Mr Goode, and Fr Jimmy embarked on a transformative immersion experience in the Philippines. The group visited three schools, a farming community, and the Missionaries of Charity home for the elderly, engaging deeply with local communities and sharing in their stories, faith, and resilience.

The immersion was enriched by visits to cultural and faith sites of significance, offering students a profound insight into Filipino values including a deep sense of justice, fairness, warmth, humor, adaptability, and amazing resilience. The strong family orientation and welcome of the Filipino people left a lasting impression on the group.

Thanks to the generosity of our College and local communities, the group was able to share \$18,000 in fundraising with the places they visited, supporting vital local initiatives and services.

We look forward to sharing more reflections and stories in the coming weeks with those who supported our journey.

Mrs Katie Pole, Deputy Principal, Bosco Campus



31.07.25

Indigenous Connection

NAIDOC Week

The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy

Last week, our school proudly celebrated NAIDOC Week with a range of activities that honoured and embraced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, histories, and voices.

Uncle Chris Dodd visited our Year 1 and 2 students, sharing cultural artefacts, stories, and music. Students relished the opportunity to participate in the music making using clapsticks.

On Wednesday, our Cultural Cook-Up gave students at Benedict and Bosco the opportunity to taste native foods, including kangaroo and

crocodile. At lunchtime, students enjoyed Nunga Screen featuring Eddie's Lil Homies.

We wrapped up the week with a celebratory Community BBQ and Bonfire on Thursday. Families joined us for a night of connection, complete with a treasure hunt, toasted marshmallows, and delicious damper cooked over the fire. A heartfelt thank you to the Broughton Meat Store for generously donating the delicious meat for our BBQ, and to AJ Constable for a special and meaningful Welcome to Country—spoken in Nukunu language.

Thank you to all who contributed to making NAIDOC Week such a special celebration of culture, identity, and community. We look forward to continuing to develop our knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture throughout the year.

A Day of Cultural Learning with Judy Crosby-Woods

We were honoured to welcome Judy Crosby-Woods back to St Marks College last week for a powerful day of cultural sharing and creativity.

In the morning, our Reception students participated in a Tracks in the Sand art experience. Using their hands and sand on paper, students created artworks that told stories through tracks—connecting deeply with the land and each other. Judy finished the session by teaching the students song in her language.

After lunch, Judy met with students Bosco Campus, where she led an engaging session on cultural burning practices, symbols, and the art of storytelling. Each student designed their own story using Aboriginal symbols, transferring them onto clapsticks. We began the process of pyrography, burning the designs into the wood—bringing the stories to life in a traditional and meaningful way.

Huge thanks to Judy for sharing her knowledge, time, and warmth. Her visit left our students inspired and proud to connect with culture through hands-on learning experiences.

Cultural Connections on Nukunu Land – Week 2

On Wednesday of Week 2, students across Benedict and Bosco deepened their understanding of culture and Country through hands-on, sensory-rich experiences right here on Nukunu land.

Our Ochre Dough Sensory Experience, beautifully facilitated by our Year 5 students, invited younger students to explore natural textures and scents using playdough made from Davidson Plum, Wattleseed, Lemon Myrtle, and Strawberry Gum. Using Aboriginal symbols and natural materials found on our school grounds, students created stunning masterpieces that celebrated connection to land and story.

In our Indigenous Garden, students gathered with Kelly Bray and Kim White for a weaving experience. Around the warmth of the campfire, Kelly shared the deep cultural significance of weaving as a practice of patience, tradition, and community. As music played softly in the background, students enjoyed the chance to sit together, share conversation, and develop their weaving skills in a peaceful, reflective space.

These experiences reminded us of the power of learning through doing—and of the beauty that comes from listening, creating, and connecting.

Mrs Jenna George, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lead Teacher



Celebration of Success

Across the College this week, our campuses celebrated students for their academic success and outstanding effort at our Semester 1 Celebration of Success.

The award winners met specific criteria set by the school, and it was wonderful to see so many awardees. We congratulate all of our Academic Achievement Award and Diamond Endeavour Award winners!



Tips from our School Counsellors

Tips on Growing Gratitude Together

Naomi, Benedict Campus

Gratitude helps children build a positive outlook, strengthen relationships, and feel happier day to day. Additionally, it can also reduce stress, improve sleep and increase resilience when life gets tough.

Ideas to practice gratitude with your child

- Share on thing you're grateful for each day so they see it in action.
- At dinner or bedtime ask, "What's one good thing from today?"
- Write thank-you notes or draw pictures for someone they appreciate.
- Start a gratitude jar and add notes together.

For more tips visit <https://www.helpguide.org/mental-health/wellbeing/gratitude>

Tips on Self-Compassion

Sonya, Bosco Campus

What is Self-Compassion

Self-compassion is the practice of being kind, understanding and accepting towards oneself. It is understanding and accepting that mistakes are part of the human experience, and we should treat ourselves with the same compassion as if it were a friend when we make a mistake. Practicing self-compassion can help to reduce anxiety, stress, depression, and low self-esteem, while helping to build resilience and confidence. Below are some techniques to help nurture self-compassion.

Grounding and Mindfulness

- Acknowledge your five senses: Sight, Smell, Hearing, Feeling and Taste. Name (aloud or in your head) five things you can hear, four things you can see, three things you can feel, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.
- Body Scan: Start at you head and work your way down acknowledging any feelings or sensations without judgement. Some things you may consider are the feeling of your hair on your shoulders, forehead or is it blowing in the breeze, whether you feel cold or hot, whether you are hungry or full, whether you have your legs crossed, do you have shoes on etc.

Keep a Compassion Journal

- Write down what bothered you.
- How you felt – emotions and feelings you experienced
- Write down a kind response to yourself about the situation.
- Journaling can help promote gentle self-awareness, understanding, and acceptance.

Self-Compassion Break

- When feeling overwhelmed, stop and breathe for 2 minutes.
- Acknowledge how you feel, name the feeling.
- Remind yourself that it will be ok: acknowledge the tough moment and remember everyone has setbacks.
- Speak kindly to yourself: remind yourself of how you would speak to a friend.

Write a Letter from a Caring Friend

Write a letter to yourself, imagine what a caring friend would say, acknowledge mistakes, offer forgiveness, and show kindness to yourself.

Additional Tips for Teenagers

- Avoid comparing yourself to others on social media. Social media is mostly curated, and everyone has struggles behind the scenes.
- Engage in activities that are meaningful and stimulate growth, new skills and fosters good memories.
- Sleep and exercise are important in maintaining a healthy wellbeing both physically and mentally.

For more self-compassion techniques please visit:

<https://www.verywellmind.com/self-compassion-exercises-to-practice-daily-8619690>

2026 + 2027 Enrolments



Enrolments are open for students commencing at St Mark's in 2026 and 2027. Early enrolment is encouraged!

Scholarships are available for new and current enrolments. Click to find out more about our [scholarships](#) which close on 27 June.

Click to find out about the [enrolment process](#) or here to view our [Campus Tour](#) dates.

Got a degree but looking for a change? Change your career direction with us!



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Mentored
support



[Read More](#)

College Calendar

[Click here](#) to access the Calendar for our College events.

Canteen Specials

[Click here](#) to check out the [weekly specials](#) for the upcoming fortnight.

Mini Mark's Playgroup



Tuesday mornings, 8.45am – 10.15am held during term time
All welcome!

[Read More](#)

Out of School Hours Care



YMCA OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

- ▶ Quality educators
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Available at Benedict Campus for Before School, After School and Vacation Care.

[Find out more about OSHC.](#)

Study Hub



Need assistance with your study?

Visit the Bosco Campus Student Hub after school daily until 4.30pm.

College Quick Links

College Uniform

[Uniform Policy and Guidelines](#)

[Uniform Buy, Swap and Sell](#)

Parents + Friends Community

[Join our community!](#)

Term Dates 2025

Term 1 - Tuesday 28 January - Friday 11 April

Term 2 - Tuesday 29 April - Friday 4 July

Term 3 - Tuesday 22 July - Friday 26 September

Term 4 - Monday 13 October - Wednesday 10 December

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