



St Raphael's
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL
SOUTH HURSTVILLE

Parent Information Handbook 2026

I welcome you, your child and your wider family to St Raphael's Catholic Primary School. I consider it a privilege to join you in partnership in the education of your child. The quality of education is a high priority of St Raphael's Catholic Primary School, where we value and nurture the dignity of every person.

I hope that all who come to St Raphael's Catholic Primary School will see Christ reflected in all that occurs in word and action, enabling our community to be Christ for others. A distinctive mark of St Raphael's is the emphasis on community – principal, teachers, staff and parents working together and with the wider community to educate and develop the whole child: emotionally, academically, physically, socially, and spiritually.

We also value and nurture the gifts and talents that each child brings, and we invite parents to join us in partnership so that we can nurture your child's faith development and provide a high-quality education together.

We encourage you to be active partners with the school in your child's education and involve yourself in the school community, where you are now a valued member.

Mark Abad

PRINCIPAL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL	Page 1
A SHORT HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL	Page 3
OUR MISSION	Page 4
THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY OF THE SCHOOL	Page 5
PASTORAL CARE	Page 6
SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT	Page 7
THE CURRICULUM	Page 7-11
SPECIAL PROGRAMS	Page 11-12
HOMEWORK	Page 12-13
ASSESSMENT & REPORTING	Page 13 - 14
GENERAL INFORMATION	Page 14 - 24
UNIFORM	Page 23
HELPFUL HINTS	Page 25

HISTORY OF ST RAPHAEL'S SCHOOL

St Raphael's Primary School began with the arrival of four Sisters of Charity in 1929. They held classes in the Church, as many schools did in those days, on verandahs, in local houses and even in a tennis shed.

On 14 September, 1952, the Sisters opened a beautiful new school and, to the delight of all, Bishop Lyons, representing Cardinal Gilroy, processed down George Street blanketed by a guard of honour, comprised of the Children of Mary, Boy Scouts and children from the school.

The school expanded in the sixties and by the early seventies had to purchase four demountable classrooms to cater for the extra numbers.

By 1990, all buildings were in a state of disrepair and a submission was made to the Federal Government for assistance to refurbish the original building and erect three new classrooms, administration and staff facilities. The submission was successful and building commenced in 1994. The new St Raphael's was officially opened and blessed by Cardinal Clancy on Sunday, 10 March, 1996. A new refurbishment of K-3 classrooms took place in 2008, with a further refurbishment of Years 4-6 classrooms in 2009.

In asserting our vision for Catholic Education towards the year 2010, it is fitting to build in the firm foundations laid by the Sisters of Charity who staffed the school from 1929 to 1974 and the many lay teachers who worked with them in sharing the 'Good News' and providing a sound education for the children of St Raphael's.



OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

MISSION

Inspired by St Raphael and the charism of the Sisters of Charity we believe we are called to live in a spirit of harmony committed to be messengers of hope and healing in our world.

VISION

Strive and make a difference by learning, growing, working together as disciples of Jesus to make our school, our community and our world a better place.

VALUES

Strive, Learn, Grow, Together

We welcome opportunities to unite our community in a common vision with the involvement and partnership of parents, parish and the wider community.



St. Raphael's School Prayer

Loving God,
We thank you for our school.
We pray that we will live in harmony and continue to spread the
good news.

Help us to be messengers of hope and healing and give us
strength to be a friend to all.

St Raphael, *pray for us.*
Mary Help of Christians, *pray for us.*
St Mary of the Cross MacKillop, *pray for us.*
Venerable Mary Aikenhead, *pray for us.*

Amen



THE CATHOLIC IDENTITY OF OUR SCHOOL

Jesus Christ and his teachings are at the centre of the Catholic School. The Sydney Catholic Schools Vision Statement is “Thriving Catholic communities through excellent teaching and learning.”

In committing to this vision, schools explicitly engage with the Sydney Catholic Schools Mission “to know and love Christ through learning.”

Religious Education is at the heart of Catholic Education. It informs and influences all learning in the school and is integrated throughout the curriculum. Sending a child to a Catholic school involves supporting this religious dimension.

At St Raphael's, the Good News of Jesus is central to our lives, and we regularly celebrate and demonstrate our faith. Working together with parents and our parish priest, we aim to give children a sound understanding of our Catholic doctrine, tradition and Gospel values and emphasise the importance of living these out in our daily lives.

Each class participates daily in the Religious Education curriculum program. This program is supported by the use of Religious Education textbooks, *To Know, Worship and Love*. The Religious Education curriculum brings together the essential components of knowledge, understanding, appreciation and celebration of our rich tradition. It provides the opportunities and the skills for young people to meet the challenges of living in the Catholic faith in today's world. The curriculum is intended to complement the work of the parents and the parish in assisting with the life-long process of the religious education of the individual.

Prayer is also a vital and significant part of classroom and school life. Parents are invited to remain for morning school prayer, led by our captains and vice captains. The celebration of the Sacraments is an integral part of our Catholic identity. The Sacraments of Initiation, First Communion and Confirmation are part of the Year 3 and Year 6 programs. The children participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and each class attends the Parish Mass on Tuesdays throughout the term. On special feast days and celebrations, the children attend Mass as a whole school. Parents are encouraged to attend these Masses and to join in our prayer time at assemblies and liturgies. We also support parents in their responsibility to take their children

to Mass each Saturday or Sunday, where they join with the parish community and celebrate the Eucharist.

St Raphael's has a deep commitment to supporting various charitable organisations. This commitment is informed and guided by the key principles of Catholic social teaching, and consideration is given to the competing needs of different groups and organisations.

St Raphael's prioritises Catholic organisations and agencies, especially Caritas Australia, Catholic Mission, CatholicCare, St Vincent de Paul and the Archdiocesan Charitable Works Fund. Financial support to charities is voluntary and the school operates with total transparency in supporting charities, especially where fundraising is involved. All community members are aware of the purpose and processes of any monetary collection and are advised of the final amount contributed.



PASTORAL CARE

Pastoral programs represent a specific and planned means of helping students to value themselves and to experience well-being. At St Raphael's these programs include:

- Social and moral development through our Religious Education program
- Sexuality, health and personal safety through the Personal Development, Health & Physical Education (PDHPE) program.
- Drug Awareness programs through Life Education program.
- Programs dealing with grief and loss through the Seasons program.
- Student counselling through our in-school counselling service.
- Social and Emotional Learning Program (Open Parachute)
- Restorative Justice Program based on the Schoolwide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPBL) framework

STUDENT WELLBEING

Sydney Catholic Schools has established a Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy which is implemented by our school and all systemic schools in the Archdiocese. This policy is underpinned by the National Safe Schools Framework and the Archbishop's Charter.

The school's Pastoral Care Policy is based on the principles of restorative justice. This policy reflects the vision and mission of the Catholic Church and is characterised by safety, trust and mutual respect. The National Safe Schools Framework and audit tool is important in assisting key stakeholders in planning, implementing and maintaining a safe, supportive and protective learning community that promotes student safety and wellbeing. The well-being of all our students is held in high regard. It enables us to provide a learning environment that provides for spiritual, physical, emotional, cognitive and social growth.

We have continued to implement the School-wide Positive Behaviours for Learning (SPBL) framework to ensure consistent, appropriate behaviours are evident throughout the school.

Corporal punishment is prohibited in this School. The school does not sanction the administration of corporal punishment by school persons or non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline in the school.

St Raphael's Student Behaviour Management Guidelines set out clear expectations of students, staff and parents and are based on the Gospel teachings of respect for self and others. The school adopts a whole-school approach to creating a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment. Student safety and well-being are held in high regard. The staff believe they are enhanced when students feel connected to their school and have positive and respectful relationships with their peers and teachers.

SCHOOL REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

The School Review and Improvement (SRI) is a system-wide commitment and strategy for creating the culture and practice of continuous improvement. The SRI Framework, underpinned by the Vision, Mission and Values of Sydney Catholic Schools, supports schools in achieving improved learning outcomes and life opportunities for all students.

Mission: To know and love Christ through learning

Vision: Thriving Catholic communities through excellent teaching and learning.

Values:

Truth: seeking to know truth

Collaboration: engaging respectfully and meaningfully with others

Excellence: striving to achieve one's potential

Empathy: appreciating and responding to the views and needs of others

Curiosity: nurturing the search for meaning

As a system of schools, we will continue to collaborate as professional learning communities in discerning effective processes and approaches to ensure the best possible outcomes for all students in their spiritual and academic development.

Central to each school's ongoing development is the strengthening of a **culture of review** focusing on **students** and their **learning**, specifically the quality and effectiveness of learning and teaching, the school's Catholic identity and the religious, spiritual and other dimensions of school life.

In the Archdiocese of Sydney each school undertakes a formal process to develop a three to five year strategic plan based on effective and rigorous plans for development and improvement.

Each year, the school undertakes a set of structured processes that provides for the systematic implementation and ongoing evaluation of agreed strategic intents.

THE CURRICULUM

KEY LEARNING AREAS

The teachers follow the mandatory National Education Authority (NESA) Primary Syllabus documents, which give general outlines of the knowledge, skills and understandings expected at each stage of compulsory primary schooling in Six Key Learning Areas. At present, the new Syllabuses are being implemented in the school between 2021 and 2027. In all Catholic schools, a seventh Key Learning Area is Religious Education, which is taught as a subject and integrated into all aspects of school life.

Religious Education (RE)

The Religious Education Curriculum brings together the essential components of knowledge, understanding, appreciation and celebration of our rich tradition. The development of the new curriculum in 2022 incorporates the use of texts, *To Know, Worship and Love*. These texts are regularly sent home. Through the seasons of the Liturgical Year, the Religious Education Curriculum aims to assist the students to reflect upon, make sense of, celebrate and live more deeply the mystery of Christ as revealed in each person and in relationship with others, the Church and Creation.

English

The aim of English in Years K–10 is to enable students to understand and use language effectively. Students learn to appreciate, reflect on and enjoy language and make meaning in ways that are imaginative, creative, interpretive, critical and powerful.

Students engage with literature from Australia, including the rich voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and from across the world. These texts communicate in distinctive ways and are shaped by lived experiences, knowledge, cultures, and connections. By exploring historic and contemporary texts, representative of a range of cultural and social perspectives, students broaden their experiences and become empowered to express their identities, personal values and ethics.

Students develop foundational literacy skills in the early years and progressively build on these skills. This enables them to learn about and control language in increasingly sophisticated contexts.

Through interrelated practices and experiences in understanding and creating texts, students learn about the power, purpose, value and art of English. The development of these interconnected skills and understandings supports students in becoming confident communicators, critical and imaginative thinkers, and informed and active participants in society.

The focus areas for each stage support students' growing knowledge and understanding in the areas of:

- Oral language and communication
- Vocabulary
- Phonological awareness
- Print conventions
- Phonic knowledge
- Reading fluency
- Reading comprehension
- Creating written texts
- Spelling

- Handwriting
- Understanding and responding to literature

Mathematics

Mathematics K–10 aims to enable students to become confident users of mathematics, learning and applying the language of mathematics to communicate efficiently and effectively. They develop an increasingly sophisticated understanding of mathematical concepts and a fluency with mathematical processes that helps them to interpret and solve problems. Students make connections within mathematics and connect mathematical concepts with the world around them. They learn to understand and appreciate how mathematics is a relevant part of their lives.

Mathematical ideas have evolved and continue to develop across cultures and have been practised in Australia by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples for thousands of years. Through the study of mathematics, students apply their knowledge and skills to deepen their understanding of the world.

Mathematics is a reasoning and creative activity, integral to scientific and technological advances across many fields of endeavour. The symbolic nature of mathematics provides a powerful and precise means of communication.

Making connections across mathematical concepts and other subject areas enhances students' ability to understand the purpose of learning mathematics and to develop a deeper conceptual understanding. This helps students to recognise the role of mathematics in solving problems in the world around them, applying their understanding to familiar and unfamiliar situations.

By studying mathematics, students develop essential numeracy skills and fluency, while nurturing the ability to think logically, critically and creatively. They learn about patterns and reason about relationships, creating opportunities to generalise their solutions and to solve non-routine problems.

When students enjoy learning mathematics, they develop a positive self-concept and become self-motivated learners through active participation in appropriately challenging tasks. This can enhance their resilience in solving mathematical problems relevant to further education and their everyday lives.

The syllabus structure illustrates the important role Working mathematically plays across all areas of mathematics and reflects the strengthened connections between concepts. Working mathematically has been embedded in the outcomes, content and examples of the syllabus.

Mathematics K–10 outcomes and their related content are organised in:

- Number and algebra
- Measurement and space
- Statistics and probability

Working mathematically

The Working mathematically processes present in the Mathematics K–10 syllabus are:

- communicating
- understanding and fluency
- reasoning
- problem-solving.

Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE)

The HSIE key learning area (KLA) includes the History K-10 Syllabus and the Geography K-10 Syllabus.

- **History**

The History K-10 Syllabus provides opportunities in K-6 to learn about Change and Continuity. Students continue to investigate their connections with the past through personal, family and local community history. They examine significant events and people that shaped Australian colonies and the nation. This syllabus also focuses on Cultures and Social Systems and Structures.

- **Geography**

The Geography K-10 Syllabus also focuses on Cultures and Environments. In Geography K-6, students investigate the diversity of places, including economic, demographic and social differences across countries. They explore business activities and trade connections across local and global scales and the effects of technologies and economic activities on people's lives. Students examine how local and state governments organise and manage places.

Science and Technology (S&T)

The Science and Technology program develops students' competence and creativity in applying the processes of Working Scientifically and Working Technologically to appreciate and understand the Natural Environment and Made Environment. The students are involved in designing solutions relevant to science and technology in their lives.

Creative and Practical Arts (CaPA)

Students are provided with various experiences to develop their skills and interest in creative and practical arts, including drama, visual art, music and dance. As well as participating in school-based activities, students can participate in regional performances and competitions.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE)

The PDHPE program promotes positive attitudes and good self-esteem. It involves regular physical exercise, learning about the importance of leading an active, healthy lifestyle, and developing skills in interpersonal relationships.

The school offers a comprehensive Physical Education program which includes:

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
Gymnastics/Athletics	Dance	Games and Ball Skills	Swimming Program

School Carnivals in swimming and athletics are held each year. Children from Years 2-6 are selected from these to go on to represent the school at various levels.

Library

Each class has a weekly library borrowing period. The library is well stocked with books, and we are building up our collection of audio-visual and information technology resources. The children need a library bag for borrowing purposes. The library is a very important learning space which is utilised in many ways to enrich the students' learning experiences. The children are able to visit the library at some lunchtimes.

Technology

Technology is integrated across all curriculum areas. Computers, laptops, Smartboards, Chromebooks and iPads are in use in every classroom. All classes can connect to the Google/Cloudshare platform on a safe, Catholic School's network. There is an ongoing

commitment to resourcing technology each year. The school has implemented 'Bring Your Own Designated Device (BYODD) program to support student engagement and personalised learning in Years 3 – 6.



ADDITIONAL

Newman Selective Education Program

St Raphael's is a part of the Sydney Catholic Schools Newman Selective Gifted Education Program. The school provides high-quality professional learning for staff and an authentically rigorous program for gifted learners within a nurturing Catholic environment, thus enhancing the whole person. It offers a wide range of opportunities that cater for various gifted learners and support students' social and emotional well-being.

SUPPORT PROGRAMS

To cater effectively for the needs of all students at our school, we offer a range of initiatives based on the students' needs. A selection of these is outlined below:-

- **Literacy & Numeracy Support**

The literacy & numeracy support occurs across all classes from Kindergarten to Year 6 and is designed to cater effectively for the diverse learning needs of **all** our students, including academically gifted and academically talented students. The emphasis is on supporting the individual learning needs of the students. Depending on the needs of each student, the support includes withdrawal in some cases for specific lessons, differentiated programs, small group work, and the use of technology to individualise learning. The support teachers co-plan with the class teachers and are responsible for student learning in all aspects of the teaching and learning cycle.

- **Individual Programs for Students with Diverse Learning Needs**

This program is for students who have been identified by a health professional or educational psychologist as having diverse learning needs in categories such as a language delay, cognitive delay, hearing or vision impairment, physical disability, Autism Spectrum disorder and mental health. The school receives additional staffing allocation in the form of a Diverse Learning teacher to support these students through extra time and an individual adjustment plan outlining their learning priorities and goals for the year. A collaborative approach is used between school staff and parents to determine the adjustments, programs and resources required to meet the individual learning needs of these students.

- **EAL/D Support (English as an Additional Language or Dialect)**
Extra support is provided for “EAL/D” learners. These students are a diverse group in various stages of gaining competency in the English language. Based on assessments of language proficiency, some EAL/D students require and receive extra support predominately in the curriculum areas where there are high language demands on the learner.
- **Early Years Reading Intervention Program**
The Reading Intervention Program is designed to provide intervention for children in Kindergarten, Year 1 or Year 2 below the expected level in various aspects of English. The program is individualised to meet the needs of the students and are identified and selected for the program after extensive data collection and analysis.
- **Social Skills Lunch Club**
A social skills program may run once a week for a small group of students to help develop the students’ capacity to deal with the many social contexts. The aim of the group is to teach specific social and emotional skills in a relaxed, fun way to further assist them in dealing with playground and class social situations.
- **Seasons**
The Seasons program is designed to support children experiencing grief and loss due to separation, divorce, death or trauma. Children participate in eight sessions with a trained tutor in a small group situation with other students. This program is offered on a needs basis.
- **Counselling**
The school can access counselling, which provides extra support for students experiencing difficult situations, anxieties or relationship issues.

HOMEWORK

Homework helps to create a link between home and school, providing an opportunity for parents to become aware of some aspects of the school curriculum in which the child is working and to give children an opportunity to share their achievements.

The most important out-of-school activity for any child is to enjoy his/her family life.

Homework should not be the cause of tension and disruption in your family.

Our aims in giving homework are summarised as follows:

- To keep parents in touch with what is being taught in the classroom.
- To give students the opportunity to share their achievements.
- To build the child’s self-esteem and help them feel good about their individual, group and class efforts.
- To help the students form study habits and skills in an enjoyable and supportive atmosphere.
- To use the Religious Education text “To Know Worship and Love” with activities for parents to do with their children, which is sent home regularly.

At St Raphael's, homework is generally set weekly and ideally, this should be signed by a parent/guardian. In the event homework is not completed, we ask parents to write a short note explaining the situation.

Reading for pleasure is encouraged in every grade. Additional time may be needed for research and project work from time to time.

Parents can **encourage** their children by:



HOMEWORK

- praising their child's efforts
- reading to and with their children
- playing games with their children
- having a special place to hang their work
- showing they are really interested in what their child is doing at school.

Suggested times for homework per day:

- Kindergarten: 10 minutes
- Year 1 and 2: 20 minutes
- Year 3 and 4: 30 - 45 minutes
- Year 5 and 6: 45 - 60 minutes

ASSESSMENT & REPORTING CYCLE

Assessment of Children

Assessment is part of the teaching and learning cycle. It is used to inform the teacher of student understanding; provide explicit criteria about the quality of the student's work; it is used to provide feedback to students, and is used to modify teaching and learning experiences. Some examples of assessment procedures include;

- annotated work samples
- individual profiling of student learning
- student self assessment
- anecdotal records
- running records
- standardised and teacher-generated tests
- unit tasks

The children in Years 3 and 5 complete the NAPLAN Test (National Assessment Program of Literacy and Numeracy). In Year 6 the children sit the Religious Education Test. Students in Years 2 to 6 are also allowed to take the ICAS (International Competitions and Assessments for Schools) - Mathematics and English.

Reporting to Parents Regarding Children's Progress

Communication between school and parents is considered to be of utmost importance in the education of the child. At St Raphael's, the following process will assist this in a systematic way.

Parent/Teacher Evening/Follow-Up Meet and Greet - Early Term 1

This evening, followed up by a Meet and Greet interview if requested, are opportunities for parents and teachers to meet and discuss hopes and expectations for the year as a group and any issues or concerns. Teachers explain their routines and programs to parents, who are encouraged to contribute in any way possible.

Student Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning cycle; assessments are gathered during the term by teachers and students are made available to parents. They contain representative samples of student work and progress and achievement indicators against syllabus standards.

Parent / Teacher Interviews

Interviews are scheduled for parents during Term 2 and Term 4. These provide an opportunity for parents and teachers to share perceptions about the child's learning and to jointly work at solving

any problems that may be evident. Interviews may be initiated by either parents or teachers on a needs basis at other times throughout the year.

Reporting Cycle

The reporting cycle is completed in stages.

Stage 1: Parent Information Evening

Stage 2: Individual written student report and interview with parents in Term 2

Stage 3: Written student reports at the end of Term 4, with an option for an interview.



End of Year Written Report

The end-of-the-year report will provide the parents with a written overview of their child's progress in all curriculum areas throughout the second half of the year.

In addition to the outlined formal processes, other opportunities for communication are term curriculum notes, homework, interviews arranged by either teachers or parents to discuss mutual concerns, and parent workshops.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Our Parish Priest

The Parish Priest, Fr Thomas Alukka, is responsible for the spiritual welfare of the school and students. He is assisted by our Parish Ministry Coordinator, Michael Fernandez and our Pastoral Associate, Br Ben Krupowicz. Fr Thomas also plays a significant role in maintaining and developing the school grounds and buildings. The Parish School Levy contributes to the cost of ongoing building development and maintenance.

School Leadership

The Principal, Assistant Principal, the Religious Education Coordinator, Instructional Specialist and Leader of Learning form the Leadership Team. They are responsible for all matters related to the running of the school. They are assisted by the parish priest, staff, students and parents.

Principal:	Mr Mark Abad
Assistant Principal:	Ms Karin Chatwood
Religious Education Co-ordinator:	Mr Liam Weston
Instructional Specialist:	Mrs Angela McLellan
Leader of Learning:	Mrs Karen Woods

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for all matters related to the classroom situation. As well as teaching and assessing the progress of the children, they welcome the cooperation of parents in their work; they arrange meetings, interviews, and make themselves available to parents as the need arises.

The School Office Manager

The Office Manager is appointed to assist the Principal. The office will take care of most enquiries and/or messages. Parents wishing to make an appointment with the Principal and/or class teachers may do so through the office.

School Office Staff: **Mrs Daniela Carrabs (Mon-Thurs) & Mrs Maria Kovacevic (Thurs-Fri)**

Staff Development Days

There are nine staff development days a year. They provide the opportunity for professional development for the staff and the development of policy direction for the school. The first of these is the first day of Term 1, and the others are held during the year. On these days, the children **do not** attend regular school. Notice of these days is always given in advance.

Professional Learning Meetings

Professional Learning Meetings for staff are held weekly. This time is an important opportunity for teachers to be involved in professional development, school development and school management.

Staff Spirituality

Staff prayer is held weekly and closely linked with the Archbishop's Charter. This time is an important opportunity for staff to share and develop their spirituality and our religious dimension. Staff spirituality is valued by all staff members, and the school ensures that a spirituality day takes place each year, focusing on the needs of the staff.

The School Calendar

St Raphael's is a Catholic Systemic School that adheres to the specified opening and closing dates set by the Sydney Catholic Schools (SCS). These dates will be published in the school newsletter and on the [St Raphael's parent calendar](#).



School Routine

Children will be supervised by a rostered teacher from 8.20am.

You are requested to ensure that your child **does not** arrive before 8.20am as the school cannot accept responsibility for children's safety prior to this time.

Children are expected to be at school by 8.50am

8.50am	Morning buzzer / Morning Prayer
9.00am	Classes begin
10.50am	Morning Tea
11.20am	Classes resume
1:20pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Classes resume
3.00pm	Classes finish

After school supervision finishes at 3.25pm. **The school is not responsible for children still at school after this time.**

LATE ARRIVALS AND EARLY DEPARTURES ARE DISCOURAGED BECAUSE OF:

- the interruption to class routine
- the effect on your child's learning, and
- the **legal requirements** of school attendance

When a child arrives at school late, or needs to leave early, parents must report to the office and sign in or out via the Compass Kiosk. If a child is regularly late or departs early, the school will contact parents to seek justification for absences.

Attendance

By law, children are required to be at school each day the school is open.

[Please see Sydney Catholic Schools Attendance Policy.](#)

Absences from School

The following is information from the Sydney Catholic Schools for compulsory school attendance.

“In NSW all children from six years of age are **legally required** to attend school or be registered for home schooling. At present if your child is absent from school, you **must** tell the school (either through Compass, a note, phone call, email) and provide a reason for your child’s absence (e.g. sickness, special celebrations, serious or urgent family situation, infectious illness, health appointments).

All families are encouraged to holiday or travel during school vacations. If you consider that it is in your child’s best interests to be exempted from the legal requirements to attend school for 5 days or more, **you must apply to the Principal for an exemption in advance.** The school will provide you with a compulsory form to complete. The Principal will consider your application and decide on whether to grant a “Certificate of Exemption from Attendance at School”.

Before & After School Care (SCSECS)

Before and After school care is provided on the premises at the school through the company, Sydney Catholic School Early Childhood Services. This service is separate to the school and all enquiries are to be made to southhurstville.oshc@syd.catholic.edu.au or 9568 8628 or 0467 631 942

Custody of Children

The school would appreciate being sent a certified copy of a Court Order if you have sole custody of your child/children. It is in your child’s best interest that the school is advised as to who is permitted to collect your child in the case of parent separation.

Change of Address, Telephone Number or Email Address

It is important that you notify the school of any change to your address, telephone numbers and email. If your child is ill it is most distressing to him/her when we are unable to contact you because our records show an incorrect telephone number/address.

Wet Weather

Children must wear raincoats, yellow is recommended. For safety reasons we discourage the children from bringing umbrellas. Children will wait under shelter with a teacher until they are collected after school.

Sun Protection

It is the school's policy that all children wear the school hats. They are available from the school office. Other hats, eg baseball style caps are not permitted. Children must wear their hats during sport periods, recess and lunch times. Your co-operation in this is expected.

A No-Hat, Shade-Play policy is in force on the playground.

Colour Houses

Children will be placed in a House Colour when they begin school, and will remain in this colour throughout their schooling. All children in the same family will be placed in the same House Colour.

House Colours are used in Athletics and Swimming Carnivals and for some other school activities.

Excursions/Incursions

Excursions are events that occur outside the school. Incursions occur when a group/event come to the school. School excursions are a valuable component of the children’s school life. All children are expected to attend them. They are used to extend children’s language experiences and to promote and develop children’s social skills. Excursions may introduce, or culminate a

classroom unit of study, thus giving children either insight into what they are to learn, or the opportunity to use what they have learnt.

The teacher selects a few parents who have attended the Parent Volunteer Training to lead a small group of students to assist with duty of care under the teacher's supervision. Additional parents attending the excursion are discouraged as this tends to distract the children.

The cost of an incursion/excursion will appear on the fees statement.

Canteen

The school tuckshop is managed by the catering company, Dapaba Pty Ltd. T/AS Kids Catering, and is staffed by employees of the company.

At present, the school tuckshop operates on **Monday and Thursdays** for lunch and recess. Lunch orders are through the app, flexischools. All lunches must be ordered, they cannot be bought at lunchtime. Price lists are sent home at the beginning of each term.



Children are asked to bring only the required amount of money needed to buy any extras at the canteen.

School Fees

Sending your child to a Catholic school brings with it the added responsibility of paying annual school fees. The accounts for these fees are sent home in the first weeks of Term 1. Payment is acknowledged by receipt. Included in the school fee accounts are the various levies and charges appropriate to your child's class, as well as excursion and activity costs.

Fees can be paid in full annually, quarterly or monthly. Statements are issued via email on a monthly basis and SMS reminders are sent on outstanding amounts. Families are encouraged to contact the school office to discuss late fee payment or any difficulties in meeting financial responsibilities. The Sydney Catholic Schools Fee Liaison Unit assists the school to manage this process. **School fees can be paid Bpay, Compass Pay, Eftpos or cash.**

Building Levy

In addition to the school fees there is a Building Levy that is charged to each family to assist the Parish in meeting the necessary costs of supporting our school. This is included in the school fee accounts in Term 1.

Money Paid to School

Payments for other purposes eg school photos; university competitions are paid online. If you are sending cash to school for any reason, the money should be placed in an envelope indicating your child's full name, class and what the payment is for on the front.

Traffic Management Plan

Before School

Russell Avenue

- Each car that enters the car drop off zone has a two minute time frame to drop off their children. This is a kiss and drop zone. '
- Driver to remain in the vehicle at all times
- No person is to do a U-turn in Russell Lane, all traffic is to proceed to George Street
- No person is to use St Bede's driveway or lawn
- Parents are encouraged to park and walk
- Drivers are to remain attentive at all times in the school zone
- If congestion exists drive around the block and join the queue again

- All parents to supervise their child crossing the road

George Street

- A drop-off zone exists in George Street between 8 and 9am
- Parents are encouraged to stay in their cars; however, if they need to get out, they must remain within 3m of their vehicle
- Drivers are not to make U turns in high traffic school zones over double lines
- Drivers encouraged to use the turning circle at the end of George Street
- Double parking, parking in driveways and on neighbouring properties is not allowed
- Drivers are to obey no parking and no stopping signs
- Children exit cars on the kerb side
- Children not to get bags out of the back of cars

During School

- In the unlikely event that a car needs to enter the school grounds during school time, the driver reports to the school office. Office staff will open the gates and accompany the car whilst the car is moving to ensure that no child walks near the area in which the car is driving. The car is to travel at a speed no greater than 5km/hour. Once the car is parked the school gates are to be locked. The same procedure applies when the car leaves the school site during School
- Drivers to obey the no parking, no stopping and disability signs
- Parents to supervise their child at all times when alighting or getting out of the vehicle
- All children to be accompanied by an adult in school hours and proceed straight to the office to be signed in or out

After School

Russell Avenue

- Cars are to join the pick up line in Russell Lane and move forward towards George Street, no person is to “jump” the line. (If the line is obstructing traffic in St Georges Parade, drivers to proceed around the block and join the line again)
- No car is to be parked in the pick up lane; no person is to leave their vehicle in the pickup lane except to place child into a seat belt
- No person is to do a U-turn in Russell Lane, all traffic is to proceed to George Street after pick up.
- No person is to use St Bede’s driveway or lawn
- Cars are to proceed to the teacher on duty, where the children will be escorted in the car.
- No student is allowed to go to a car without a teacher's supervision.
- No parking on St Bede’s lawn, parking area or driveway.
- Children enter car on the kerb side with their bag
- No child is to place a bag in the back of a car
- Parents encourage not to use the pick up zone if the child cannot use the seat belt independently

George Street

- All students are to be picked up either in the car pick up line; or on the top playground
- No child is to be called to a parked car
- No parking in driveways or on other resident properties.

- No double parking
- No U turns in high traffic school zone
- All children to enter car on kerb side only
- Parents responsible for securing their child in the vehicle
- Pedestrians to use caution when crossing roads
- Students wait for a teacher before crossing the road unattended

Supervision

- Car pick up zone is supervised by two teachers between 3 and 3.20pm.
- School gates are opened at 2.50pm.
- Top gate near pick up is used for car pick only in the afternoon.
- All students are to be supervised by parents or teacher on duty after the final buzzer for the day.
- OOSH children wait in the Amphitheatre for an OOSH educator.
- Parents leave the playground through the double gates on the top and bottom playground
- Due to no playground supervision, no games to be played on the playground after school.
- Double gates on the top and bottom playground are locked by 3.20pm.

These procedures are in place for the safety of all. It is every person's responsibility to ensure these procedures are followed at all times.

School Newsletter

The School Newsletter is sent home every second Thursday via the compass app as a form of communication between school and parents. The newsletter contains important dates and news regarding school activities. As this is a vital form of communication, please ensure the newsletter is read. The newsletter is made available on Compass.

Infectious and Communicable Diseases

These are the MINIMUM times that a child must be absent from school if they contract the following diseases. The child will only be allowed to return to school if a doctor's certificate is presented stating that the child is no longer infectious.

ILLNESS	CHILDREN WHO HAVE THE ILLNESS	THOSE IN CONTACT
Chicken Pox	Exclude for 5 days after the spots appear	Not excluded
German Measles	Exclude for 6 days after the rash appears	Not excluded
Measles	Exclude for 5 days after the rash appears	Not excluded
Mumps	Exclude for 7 days from when the swelling begins.	Not excluded
Whooping Cough	Exclude for 21 days from when the whoop begins or until there is no whoop and a medical certificate is gained.	Not excluded
Conjunctivitis	Until all discharge from the eye stops.	Not excluded
Head Lice	Until hair has been treated with a shampoo/lotion and no 'nits' or 'lice' remain.	All contacts should be closely inspected and simultaneous treatment is recommended.

Ringworm/ Scabies	Re-admitted when proper treatment has begun and a child has a medical certificate	Not excluded but regularly checked.
Impetigo	Allowed to attend if treatment is being given and the sores are covered properly with a clean dressing.	Not excluded but regularly checked.

Immunisation Certificates

It is a government requirement that an immunisation certificate for each child is collected and stored at the school. When your child is immunised for the last time before starting school, the doctor will provide you with the appropriate certificate, a copy of which we keep at school. We must have a certificate for each child. If your child is transferring from another school, please obtain the immunisation certificate from the present school and hand it to our school secretary when your child commences here. The Immunisation Certificate reminds and encourages parents to have their children immunised against diseases that can be prevented by immunisation. This means that if there is a disease outbreak, non-immunised children will have to stay at home for their own protection.



To be completely immunised, your child needs vaccines for the following seven diseases: Diphtheria, Tetanus, Whooping Cough, Poliomyelitis, Measles, Mumps, Rubella

Accidents at School

In the event of a serious accident at school, the following procedure will be followed:

- The school will ring the parents. If the parents are unavailable, the school will ring the contact person nominated by the Parent/Guardian
- The school will contact the family doctor listed on the child's personal file, if there is a need
- The school will take the necessary steps to ensure the wellbeing of the child
- All significant accidents are entered into SCS PHRIS software
- All children at Sydney Archdiocesan Catholic schools are covered by accident insurance from Catholic Church Insurances. Claim forms are available at the school office.

It is essential that up to date phone numbers for home and work are given to the school secretary and class teacher for these situations.

Please ensure that any relevant medical information concerning your child is passed on to the school.

Asthma, Diabetes, Epilepsy, Anaphylaxis

The school has procedures for supporting children with these illnesses.

Anaphylaxis: Parents are asked to notify the school if their child has allergies or anaphylaxis. Managing anaphylaxis requires a strong partnership between the home and school. Parents are asked to supply the school with ASCIA Action Plan for Anaphylaxis from their GP and if necessary, an emergency EpiPen. The school alerts other families in the class to the needs and risks for children with anaphylaxis conditions and all teachers are trained in the correct use of EpiPens.

Asthma, Epilepsy, Diabetes: Parents are asked to notify the school if their child suffers from any of these conditions. Managing these conditions requires a strong partnership between home and

school. Parents are asked to supply the school with an action plan from their GP for managing the condition.

Medication

No child is given tablets or other prescribed medication at school without written permission from a parent or guardian. Medication is to be kept at school and by the child. Appropriate arrangements and the relevant permission forms will need to be completed by you and returned to the school.



Getting Involved

As parents, you are the first educators of your child. With this in mind, we aim to provide parents with as many opportunities as possible to become involved in their child's school life.

The best and most important way to be involved in your child's schooling is to be interested and positive about their work and supportive of their teacher. Parents are encouraged to attend school and class Masses and celebrations, help in the classroom, assist in the library and at various sporting and cultural events.

Parent Volunteers

SCS requires ALL volunteers in a school to attend an annual Volunteer Induction session. This session outlines to all volunteers their responsibilities when on the premises or attending excursions.

The induction process takes place in Term 1 each year or on a needs basis. All volunteers after the induction session must sign the Safe School Expectation Declaration sheet before they can assist at the school.

If a volunteer who is required to undertake the WWCC is not cleared, it is unlawful for them to engage as a volunteer.

The following are important points to remember:-

- No person has an automatic right to volunteer in a school
- All parents, volunteers and visitors coming into the school for any purpose must always seek permission from the Principal
- Volunteers are required to report any Child Protection concerns to the Principal so that it can be followed up in a confidential manner
- The Principal may withdraw approval to attend the school, or to volunteer at the school, if they are concerned about the person's suitability to do so, concerned about their behaviour or for a safety reason.

Resolving Concerns or Complaints

St Raphael's is committed to living the values of the Gospel. In the spirit of justice, love and reconciliation, we aim to:

- develop a positive and collaborative relationship between home and school
- welcome and value diversity of opinion
- inform the staff of the changing needs of students and families
- have clear and open communication within the community.

The school acknowledges that parents/caregivers can sometimes feel concerned about something they believe is happening in their child's school. Resolving these concerns in every school community is vital to the well-being and success of that community.

It is recognised that parents and caregivers must have access to processes that allow them to resolve concerns in a supportive, conciliatory environment, and for this reason, the school follows the *Resolution of Complaints Policy*. Please refer to the school website for more details.

High School Enrolments

The feeder schools for children attending St Raphael's are:

Girls	Boys
Bethany College, Hurstville Marist College, Penshurst St Ursula's Kingsgrove	Marist College, Penshurst Marist College, Kogarah

Parents seeking to enrol their children are responsible for making the necessary arrangements at the school of their choice. Enrolment forms for these schools are available during the official Catholic Schools enrolment period in March-May.

The School Advisory Council and Parent Representatives for each class

The Principal selects the Advisory Council and provides wisdom in relation to broader areas of challenge for the school community.

The council provides feedback, support and advice to the School Principal and is accountable to the Principal.



Council members are invited to contribute to the Enrolment and Finance Committees at the Principal's request.

In addition to the School Advisory Council, **parent representatives** from each class are also nominated by the parents to coordinate fundraising events for their class and meet with the principal to discuss various curriculum issues and/or other points of discussion for their grade.

Uniform

All items of St Raphael's uniform with the exception of school bags and hats are available at Lowes Hurstville. They are located at 276 Forest Rd, Hurstville (phone 95801022)

School bags, library bags, and hats are available from the school office.

A second-hand uniform shop is run from the school, with all items priced at \$2 and \$5.

Labelling Belongings

School clothing can be expensive and is often lost or misplaced. So as to avoid this situation, parents are requested to mark **all** removable items of uniform with the child's name and class. A periodic check by you will ensure that the labelling is legible.

General Uniform Requirements

- Hair is to be tied back if long.
- Hair to be kept neat and tidy/no razor lines or undercuts
- No jewellery is to be worn except watch and earrings (one sleeper or stud per ear)
- The wearing of nail polish and/or makeup is not allowed.

Lost Property Bin

- This is located near the office area. The lost property that remains unclaimed is disposed of at the end of each term. Please make sure all uniform items are marked with the child's name.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Items to be purchased from Lowes, Hurstville.



SUMMER - BOYS



SUMMER DRESS - GIRLS



SUMMER SPORTS - UNISEX



SUMMER CULOTTES - GIRLS



WINTER - BOYS



WINTER TUNIC - GIRLS



WINTER SPORTS - UNISEX

BOYS	GIRLS
<p>Summer Uniform ~School white shirt with crest ~Navy shorts ~Navy ankle-style socks ~Black leather-style school shoes - no fabric-type material - See below for more information</p>	<p>Summer Uniform ~Blue and white frock OR ~School white shirt with crest with Culottes ~White ankle-style socks ~Black leather-style school shoes - no fabric-type material - See below for more information ~ White or blue ribbon/hair tie in hair ~Scrunchies (available from Lowes)</p>
<p>Winter Uniform ~White long-sleeve shirt with ~Navy trousers ~Plain royal blue tie ~Navy wool jumper OR Navy Jacket ~Navy ankle socks ~Black leather-style school shoes - no fabric-type material - See below for more information</p>	<p>Winter Uniform ~Navy tunic with White long sleeve blouse/PP collar OR ~White long-sleeve blouse/PP collar with Navy pants ~Royal blue tab ~Navy wool jumper OR Navy Jacket ~Navy tights or long dark blue socks ~Black leather-style school shoes - no fabric-type material - See below for more information</p>

Summer Sports Uniform

- ~ Short-sleeved panelled microfiber white/navy polo with school emblem
- ~ Navy microfibre shorts with school emblem
- ~ White ankle socks
- ~ Runner – predominantly white, no fluoro colours

Winter Sports Uniform

- ~ Long-sleeved panelled microfibre white/navy polo with school emblem
- ~ Tracksuit – navy track pants to match jacket (navy/white microfibre with school emblem)

All children require a library bag.

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MUST BE PURCHASED FROM THE SCHOOL OFFICE.
Navy School Bag/Backpack, hats and library bags.

School Shoe

Formal leather school shoe

OR

School-friendly leather style shoe

- durable full leather look design (fully black) that resembles an activity shoe but maintains a neat, structured and polished appearance. **No fabric type material or white sole**
- No vibrant patterns, logos or contrasting colours

Sports Shoe

- Predominately white sports running shoe - no bright colours



Helpful Hints

Independence

Young children must develop independence and a sense of responsibility. You can assist in this development by encouraging your child to carry his/her own bag to and from school, placing his/her lunch order in the tuckshop basket, taking care of their possessions, etc.

Starting School

When your child begins school, he/she has an exciting time ahead, but first, there are many things they must adjust to:

- going to a special building every day
- following a different routine
- mixing with a larger number of children
- interacting with adults other than parents

It may take a little time for your child to adjust, but the teacher will help him/her to share activities with fellow pupils. Most children have been to pre-school and adjust very well to school. It is also important to:

- share in your child's new life. Talking to them about their new experiences is a great way to achieve this
- ensure that your child is on time for school. Punctual and regular attendance is essential.
- School begins promptly at 8.50am. Children who are late can feel embarrassed and often miss out on the first instructions for the day. This can be disruptive to both the child and the entire class. A teacher will be on duty from 8.20am each day. **There is no supervision before this time.** The school day ends at 3.00pm. Try to be punctual to collect your child as they get nervous if you are late. Ring the office if you are unavoidably detained and we can reassure your child.
- only pack as much food as your child can eat. Check whether your child can unwrap Glad Wrap and other food packaging. **Limit treats.**
- cover all books, write names on them as required and return them to school as requested by the teacher
- ensure that no toys are brought to school except on your child's news day. These will be kept in the classroom and sent home the same day
- enforce our 'no hat, Shade play' policy, so please ensure that your child brings his/her school hat every day.
- have a raincoat in your child's bag in case of wet weather. No umbrellas please as they can pose a danger when mishandled
- provide individual cupcakes, doughnuts or ice blocks if you wish to celebrate a birthday. Birthdays are acknowledged in the classrooms and at our Friday Awards Assembly.

Helping Your Child to Prepare for/Adjust to School

It can be a change for a five year old to pass from the intimacy of the family circle to school. Here are some practical ways in which you can positively support this transition:

- If your child is upset, it is best that parents make a quick exit. The teachers will support children if they are upset.
- Tears after the first week are not uncommon. Positively reinforce school happenings, treating everything that the child does or brings home as important.
- Provide clothing that is easy to fasten. A painting smock/shirt with velcro fastening enables the child to put the smock on independently.
- Please see that all articles brought to school (jumpers, track suit, raincoat, hat, lunch boxes, drink bottles, school and library bags) are clearly marked with your child's full name.

Please teach your child to:

- recognise his/her name among other names
- verbalise his/her name, address, phone number
- tie shoe laces and if possible, do up buttons, put on and take off outer clothing without assistance
- use tissues correctly to blow their own nose
- wash hands and flush the toilet unaided.
- put away articles, including books, equipment and toys, after use

- rehearse with your child some weeks in advance in the spirit of play, the different situations to be met within a school day eg seeking permission to go to the toilet
- open and close the school bag
- unpack and eat food for school. Little lunch and big lunch should be separately wrapped and packed
- dress for school
- know the journey to and from school
- be away from home and parent/carer for short periods
- listen to stories, look at pictures and talk about them

Pencils, glue, scissors, etc are supplied by the school. Please do not send any but rather have these items at home for the children to use there.

For children who are transferring from another school to St Raphael's for Year 1 to Year 6, this can perhaps be a time of anxiety and nervousness. They may need to have the opportunity and support to grieve the loss of their current friends and secure school routines at their present schools. Encourage them to talk about their feelings and reassure them that they will make many new friends at St Raphael's and that they will be successful and secure in their new class. Let them know that they can keep in touch with their "old" friends. We intend to provide many opportunities for the children to bond as a class and school community. Share with them your excitement about being part of the school community at St Raphael's.