St Thomas More Primary School

P O Box 21
Reynolds Lane
BELGRAVE VIC 3160

Information Booklet 2014

for Parents and Guardians of
St Thomas More Primary School Students

Principal: Mr Duncan Arendse
Parish Priest: Father Simon Grainger

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Fax: 9752 5063

E-mail: principal@smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au
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SCHOOL HISTORY

St Thomas More Parish Primary School was opened in 1962 and run by the Good Samaritan Sisters. It is situated at Belgrave in the Shire of Yarra Ranges, which is bordered by Sherbrooke Forest. The school attracts enrolments from a wide geographical area throughout the southern part of the Dandenong Ranges. It serves the communities from Belgrave, Tecoma, Upwey, Selby, Menzies Creek, Clematis, Emerald, Avonsleigh, Ferny Creek, Cockatoo, and other towns in the surrounding hills. The community is derived from a combination of urban and rural lifestyles influenced by the surrounding environment of forest and hills.

St Thomas More is a community of faith, based on the belief in Jesus Christ and his mission to build a better world. The school community expresses Christian values and espouses to bear witness to the faith it shares and nurtures.

Parish-School links
We have a proud history of our Catholic school being started by the local Catholic Church community. In 1962, Catholic parishioners recognised the need for the provision of Catholic Education for the children of the Belgrave community. Without the support of the Catholic Church, we would not have this school. We acknowledge and are grateful for the parish who, from the past to the present, have supported the nurturing of faith in the children in our faith community. The school maintains strong links with the Parish and together we support the common vision of our faith community. This is the Catholic Church taking care of the children in the community.

St Thomas More
St Thomas More was born in 1475 in London. He studied Law at Oxford. He was attracted to a monastic life; however, he chose to be a devout layman. He married and became the father of four children. He loved young children and was at his happiest when surrounded by three generations of his family. He enjoyed joking and singing with them as well as developing in them a profound love of prayer. He supervised their education, employing the best of teachers. Thomas More was in the forefront of a remarkable revival of learning and ideas.

In public life he was loyal to King Henry VIII and held a succession of important positions, being regarded as the first of the modern Lord Chancellors - politician, judge and lawyer. Conflict arose however when More would neither support nor swear loyalty to Henry as the head of the Church in England. He was not prepared to repudiate the spiritual authority of the Pope. "I am the King's good servant," he said, "but God's first." Thomas retired from public life. He was accused of treason and beheaded for his refusal to take the oath.

The play "A Man for All Seasons" was a play written with the theme of scholar torn between religious and political loyalties. St Thomas More was canonised in 1935.

School Logo
- The symbol for the school of St Thomas More is made up of three components:
- The shape of the tree is to signify that the school is situated in the Dandenong Ranges, which is known for its tree-covered slopes
  - The stylised tree has five branches, which signify that the Parish of St Thomas More is made up of five local church communities or Mass centres - Belgrave, Monbulk, Mt Dandenong, Emerald and Cockatoo.
  - The scales are the scales of justice and refer to the fact that St Thomas More was a lawyer.
Dear Parents,

The staff and community at St Thomas More Parish Primary School thank you for your interest in our school.

St Thomas More is an integral part of the community it serves and supports. The school provides an atmosphere that is warm and accepting of all people, where Gospel values are seen to be lived. The religious education of our children is a primary purpose of our school. We acknowledge the fact that parents are the first educators of their children and that the school, together with Parish, supports parents in the responsibility of helping faith to grow in young people.

The school is accountable to the community and, by working together, we aim to develop an environment which is conducive to providing excellence in educational outcomes in all key-learning areas, for its young citizens. Our school community works together for the academic, intellectual, moral, physical, social and spiritual development of its students.

The staff at St Thomas More School consists of a group of dedicated, enthusiastic professionals who live, share and celebrate their faith by working together for the welfare of each child.

As a staff we see it as vital that we work together with you the parents, for you are the most powerful educative influence in the life of your child.

We hope then, that in this partnership, we can work together, as you entrust your child’s future education to the community at St Thomas More.

Yours sincerely,

Duncan Arendse
Principal
VISION STATEMENT

Our faith in Jesus Christ nurtures and empowers us to become a just and dynamic community.

MISSION STATEMENT

We at St Thomas More Primary School – believe in Jesus Christ and so strive to provide a learning community where the whole person’s journey is recognised.

GOALS

At St Thomas More we hold Jesus Christ as our model of service and humanity.

We will:
- value the richness of the Catholic tradition
- have a firm belief in God’s love for us
- utilise our gifts in the service of our community
- express our beliefs in God’s love for us by the example of our lives
- make the values of the Gospel the mainspring of everyday teaching and learning
- acknowledge that Jesus, the core of our beliefs, provides a comfort and confidence which directs our actions and thinking

At St Thomas More the community is central to all our actions. The strength of this community is that our relationship and fellowship with each other is the foundation of growth.

We will:
- value and continually develop relationships with our parent community
- build connections through social and educational partnerships
- recognise and build community with staff, children and parents
- recognise the importance of networks within our community as a springboard for learning and action and to enable the sharing of hopes and responsibilities.
- provide the opportunities for shared decision making through such avenues as Education Board, parent teacher interviews, Parents and Friends and S.R.C.
- value our participation in wider community activities
- act with empathy to those experiencing personal loss and hardship
- provide a leadership model that is one of facilitation and encouragement

At St Thomas More we strive to provide an holistic education that empowers our students to be responsible citizens who act with integrity and justice.

We will:
- foster opportunities to enable students to build a better Australia and be active participants in a global community
- develop curriculum that is justice based
- work in partnership with our parent community to develop personal and social responsibility
- develop a sense of belonging which nurtures connectedness to the school community and the wider world
- Recognise and strive to develop the individual’s spiritual, emotional, physical and academic needs
At St Thomas More we support and promote the principles and practices of Australian democracy including a commitment to the following:

- electing a government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance

At St Thomas More we provide a supportive learning environment that encourages students to strive for excellence, fully utilising their talents and gifts. We will:

- recognise and value different styles of learning
- develop curriculum that provides for the abilities and interests of all children
- provide opportunities for parents to develop skills and understandings to support and enhance their children’s learning
- encourage staff to enhance their knowledge and skills, through professional development in high quality teaching programmes and strategies
- At St. Thomas Mores’ we hold the gospel values and teaching of Jesus Christ as our model of justice

We will:

- welcome and accept each other and actively provide service to those in need
- recognise the community’s right to live, to love, to learn and to play
- celebrate the gifts and talents of the members of our school community
- promote fairness in our dealing with issues regarding confidentiality, student welfare and relationships
- nourish confidence in a future world of peace, understanding, equality and harmony
PASTORAL CARE - STUDENT WELFARE

All members of the school community are involved in the Pastoral Care of each child. Staff, children and parents work in partnership to provide the extra care and support that a small school can offer.

Together we accept the responsibility to meet the needs of the children through:

- Special Education
- Integration
- Student Welfare
- Social Skills programmes

SCHOOL ORGANISATION

2014 STAFF

Principal
Duncan Arendse

Deputy Principal/Literacy Leader
Judy Smith

Religious Education Leaders
Amanda Pawley / Irene Haritos

Mathematics/ T&L Leader
Monica Rayner

Student Services / Wellbeing
Jeanette Wicks

ICT Leader
Michelle Turpin

School Leadership Team
Duncan Arendse
Judy Smith
Monica Rayner
Liz Szabo (Junior School liaison)
Amanda Pawley (Middle/Senior School liaison)

Classroom Teachers

Prep
Carol Blewitt

1/2S
Liz Szabo

1/2A
Jessica Atwell

1/2DJ
Corinne Davis / Marcia Janky

3/4ST
Michelle Turpin/Belinda Saville

3/P
Amanda Pawley

5/6C
Helen Comerford

5/6M
Amy Manion

Reading Recovery
Maree Brabender

Library Assistant
Jenny Hall

Performing Arts
Irene Haritos

Physical Education
Claire Williams

Student Wellbeing
Jeanette Wicks

More Support for Students with Disabilities (MSSD)
Tara Nimiczeck

LOTE (Japanese)
Jenna Newbigin

Visual Arts
Corinne Davis

School Officers
Ruth Butler
Julie Izon
Michele Burgess
Kelly Schmidt
Jenny Hall
Carolyn Eekelschot
Sharon Stow
Jackie Glen
Susan Hale

IT Support
Gerard Bolton
SCHOOL HOURS

A teacher will be on yard duty to supervise the children in the schoolyard before school from 8:20am and after school until 3:30pm. Care for the children is the parents' responsibility outside of these times.

All children are to be in their classroom at 8:40am to prepare for the beginning of classes at 8:45am. Normal school finishing time is at 3:10pm.

8:20        Yard supervision begins
8:40        Children to be in classrooms
8:45        Lessons begin
11:00       Recess
11:25       Bell goes - students line up
11:30       Lessons resume
12:55       Children eat lunch in classrooms
1:05        Lunch time
1:55        Bell goes - students line up
2:00        Lessons resume
3:00        Belgrave South Bus leaves
3:10        Dismissal
             Cockatoo Bus Leaves
3:30        Yard supervision ceases

SCHOOL TOURS for 2014
TERM TWO:  Friday 9th May at 12:00noon and
            Wednesday 28th May at 10:00am
TERM THREE: Thursday 21st August at 10.00am

Term Dates 2014
Term 1     28th January - 4th April
Term 2     22nd April - 27th June
Term 3     14th July - 19th September
Term 4     6th October - 19th December

Term Dates 2015
Term 1     28th January - 27th March
Term 2     13th April - 26th June
Term 3     13th July - 18th September
Term 4     5th October - 18th December

Public Holidays 2014 / 2015

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SCHOOL PROCEDURES
LATE ARRIVALS / EARLY LEAVERS
- Any child who leaves the school at a time other than normal dismissal time must have their name, time and reason for leaving, recorded by the parent or guardian. There is an Early Leaver's book kept in the office for this purpose. No child will be permitted to go home early without a parent or guardian. If children are to be collected early by another adult other than the custodial parent, they must have a note signed by the parent outlining their request.
- The above routine will also apply to children arriving late to school, the child will be provided with a late pass to give to the teacher.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE
If your children have not attended school, a written note must be provided to the school.

We encourage all families to be early/on time for each day as it is disruptive for classes and embarrassing for the child.

CAR PARK SAFETY
To ensure the children’s safety, the following guidelines must be strictly adhered to:

Morning Drop-Off
Parents are requested to drive to the church car park and let their children out at the marked drop off zone - continue to drive forward until you reach the turning circle at the back of the church, turn and drive out towards the road. If parents desire to accompany their children to the classroom, please REVERSE into one of the designated car spaces and walk WITH your children to the ramp or to the classroom.
Please DO NOT wait for an extended period of time for your children to get out of your vehicle OR DO NOT overtake a car waiting in the said Drop-Off zone (the area is NOT WIDE ENOUGH for two vehicles).

Afternoon Pick-Up
All parents are requested to REVERSE into designated car spaces.

FOR SAFETY reasons, it is important that parents who wish to use the upper car park, collect their children from behind the gate at the top of the ramp. Children are NOT PERMITTED to leave this gated area to cross the car park unattended by an adult to their parked, parent/guardian’s vehicle.

EMERGENCY PLAN and TOTAL FIRE DAY BANS
- An emergency policy is in place to handle any disasters that may arise and can be accessed on the website.
- On days of Total Fire Ban, all children need to be accounted for quickly and efficiently. To support us in caring for all children, you are asked to contact the school before 9.00am, if your child is to be absent on this day.
In all classes, your child's presence or absence will then be recorded.

For more information, St Thomas More Emergency Procedures Manual can be found on the school website—under SCHOOL POLICIES.

OFFICE PRACTICES
All monies, notes and reply slips are placed in the class ‘office tub’ at the beginning of the day. Tubs are processed in the office and sent back to the rooms with any receipts etc. that need to be sent home. It is helpful if all money and notices are sent to school in an envelope marked with the family name, class and what the money is for.
COMMUNICATION PROCESSES

PARENT/TEACHER COMMUNICATION
St Thomas More has an ongoing commitment to maintain effective communication with parents. This booklet, as well as letters which are sent during the year, keep you informed of the day-to-day activities of the school. Notices are normally distributed through the school newsletter and via classroom newsletters each term.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER
The school newsletter will be emailed home weekly, if email is provided. Otherwise with the eldest child in each family every Thursday. This is an invaluable source of information and we encourage you to read it. Notices for the newsletter should be handed to office staff by the previous Monday.

We encourage you to access your newsletter via email, - please notify the office of your email address. In Term 3, 2014 our Newsletter will become paperless. Should families require separate newsletters, please inform the office.

PARENT MEETINGS
Parent meetings are sometimes required during the year to explain programmes being undertaken during the year. Staff ask for your support through your attendance at these meetings. If your child is funded it is mandate that parents attend four meetings per year.

PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEWS
Parent-teacher interview are held twice a year. They provide the opportunity for parents and teachers to exchange information on a child's progress. Parents will be advised through the school newsletter when a Parent/Teacher/Child Interview Day is to be scheduled, together with the link to our on-line booking site. School usually finishes early for students on a Parent Teacher Interview Day.

CONTINUING INTERVIEWS
Should the occasion arise when a parent needs to speak to a teacher in detail, a brief note should be written to arrange an interview time. If the issue is more serious please make an appointment with the Principal. Conversely, if the teacher needs to talk to the parent, a meeting time will also be arranged.

For students with special needs, the Student Service Officer arranges parent support meetings.

ABSENCES
- Parents / Guardians are requested to telephone the school by 9am if their child/ren is to be absent on that day.
- Absent notes must be provided for student absences to meet the legal requirements of the school.
- An email to the school is acceptable in either of the above instances.

Email: office@smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

LET’S TALK ABOUT IT ……..

From time to time in any school, parents may have a concern or an issue about school life, which they need to resolve. The following steps outline the appropriate process to follow if you find yourself in this position.

STEP ONE

Speak to the class teacher or specialist teacher concerned about your issue or problems. (It is important to make an appointment so that teachers are not interrupted during valuable class time). Simple matters can usually be sorted out at this level.

STEP TWO

If you are unable to find a satisfactory solution to your problem make an appointment to see the Deputy Principal or the Principal to discuss the matter further.

STEP THREE

If it is a serious matter, and you believe it still needs further attention, you can make an appointment to see the Parish Priest, who is the overall manager of the Parish Primary school.
STUDENT WELLBEING

St Thomas More has many policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety and well being of students and staff. The following student policies can be found in full on the website: Anti-Bullying: Cyber Bullying: Positive Behaviour and Sunsmart Policies are reviewed every three years or as needed.

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR PROGRAMME

At St. Thomas More we have established and encouraged a school climate in which appropriate behaviour is the norm for all students. School Wide Positive Behaviours emphasises—clear expectations for all students and staff.

Our goals for positive behaviour are:
- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Respect for the environment

However, when a child exhibits inappropriate behaviour the staff member involved implements an agreed set of consequences.

Environment

Everyone has the right to be in a pleasant and stimulating environment—internal and external. At the beginning of each year, students with their teachers, develop classroom rules. There are rewards and consequences involved. Rewards may be a special day, as agreed upon by teacher and staff.

The following is a list of consequences and ways of managing inappropriate behaviour.

Stage One: First time offence:-
- Warning - Use of eye gesture/body language.
- Apology - Use positive language as a strategy.

If not:
- Use of appropriate consequences (e.g. playground time out, classroom time out)
- To complete a behaviour sheet.

Stage Two: Repeated Behaviour:
- Withdrawal of privilege.
- Time out in another classroom.
- Communication with parents may be sought

Stage Three: Repeated Behaviour:
- Principal to take further action.
- Parents informed and communication documented.
- Referral may be made for student welfare consideration.

If there are safety issues involved, the Principal may suggest that the parent take the child home (for the morning or afternoon) to consider their behaviour.

Stage Four: Suspension for Serious Offences - Suspension (CECV Policy 1993)

The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria declares that suspension of a student from the school is a serious disciplinary measure and should only be used when other disciplinary measures have not produced a satisfactory outcome. Taken from Catholic Education Office Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools.

Consequences are based on the principles of fairness and at no time ever is corporal punishment allowed. **Class and individual awards can be given to encourage positive behaviours.**
PRIVACY POLICY—Standard Collection Notice

1. The School collects personal information, including sensitive information about pupils and parents or guardians before and during the course of a pupil's enrolment at the School. This may be in writing or in the course of conversations. The primary purpose of collecting this information is to enable the School to provide schooling to the pupil and to enable them to take part in all the activities of the School.

2. Some of the information we collect is to satisfy the School's legal obligations, particularly to enable the School to discharge its duty of care.

3. Laws governing or relating to the operation of a school require certain information to be collected and disclosed. These include relevant Education Acts, and Public Health [and Child Protection]* laws.

4. Health information about pupils is sensitive information within the terms of the Australian Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act. We may ask you to provide medical reports about pupils from time to time.

5. The School from time to time discloses personal and sensitive information to others for administrative and educational purposes, including to facilitate the transfer of a pupil to another school. This includes to other schools, government departments, [Catholic Education Office, the Catholic Education Commission, the School's local diocese and the parish, Schools within other Dioceses/other Dioceses]* medical practitioners, and people providing services to the School, including specialist visiting teachers, [sports] coaches, volunteers and counsellors.

6. Personal information collected from pupils is regularly disclosed to their parents or guardians.

7. The School may store personal information in the 'cloud' which may mean that it resides on servers which are situated outside Australia.**

8. The School's Privacy Policy sets out how parents or pupils may seek access to personal information collected about them. However, there will be occasions when access is denied. Such occasions would include where access would have an unreasonable impact on the privacy of others, where access may result in a breach of the School's duty of care to the pupil, or where pupils have provided information in confidence.

9. The School Privacy Policy also sets out how you may complain about a breach of privacy and how the School will deal with such a complaint.

10. As you may know the School from time to time engages in fundraising activities. Information received from you may be used to make an appeal to you. [It may also be disclosed to organisations that assist in the School's fundraising activities solely for that purpose.] We will not disclose your personal information to third parties for their own marketing purposes without your consent.

11. On occasions information such as academic and sporting achievements, pupil activities and similar news is published in School newsletters and magazines [and on our website]. Photographs of pupil activities such as sporting events, school camps and school excursions may be taken for publication in School newsletters and magazines and on our intranet. The School will obtain separate permissions from the pupils' parent or guardian prior to publication if we would like to include photographs or other identifying material in promotional material for the school or otherwise make it available to the public such as on the internet.

12. We may include pupils' and pupils' parents' contact details in a class list and School directory.†

13. If you provide the School with the personal information of others, such as doctors or emergency contacts, we encourage you to inform them that you are disclosing that information to the School and why, that they can access that information if they wish and that the School does not usually disclose this information to third parties.

* As appropriate
** If applicable
† We will seek specific consent to publish contact details in class lists and School directories
HEALTH AND FIRST AID

IMMUNISATION
All children need to be immunised prior to starting school. Immunisation information is available from the school office or shire.

FIRST AID
Most staff members are trained in Level 2 First Aid. Teachers are rostered for First Aid duty at both recess times. It is imperative that emergency details for contacting parents are kept up to date so that parents can be notified immediately should the need arise. This information is vital in case of emergency.

A Report requesting Medical Details, (together with an Authorisation form for – Walking Excursions’, Photographs of students and Lice Inspections) - is issued to families at the beginning of Term 1 ~ please return these forms as soon as possible for our files and notify the office immediately should these details change throughout the year.

ILLNESS
If your child is unwell, please make arrangements to enable the child to be cared for away from school. School is not the place for a child who is unwell. A note needs to be sent to school once your child returns.

If a child becomes unwell at school, parents/emergency contacts will be notified and the child will remain in sick bay. If your child is treated in First Aid for any other reason and the staff member on first aid deems a call to parents is not necessary eg: A scraped knee, a note will be sent home from sick bay explaining details of injury and treatment.

MEDICATION
Should children require medication at school, parents must complete a medication slip (available from the school office) and medication must be kept in the office, not in the child’s school bag, staff will monitor and record the administration of the medication.

ASTHMA ACTION PLAN - For children who suffer from asthma, it is recommended that they have Ventolin with them at school and be able to administer it themselves. Ventolin and spacers are available in sick bay for children who require it during lunchtimes etc. We also require parents to complete an School Asthma Action Plan, in conjunction with their General Practitioner.

ANAPHYLAXIS
Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of an allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening.

Triggers include nuts, dairy products, eggs and bee sting. Specific Action Plans are developed for any student diagnosed with Anaphylaxis. All teachers are aware of the triggers and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction and the use of the “epipen” and “anapen”. An annual First Aid refresher course is attended by staff, this includes Anaphylaxis and Epi-Pen training.

Our school community can assist by;
- Considering substituting nut based food items in lunch boxes.
- Talk to your child about the dangers of: a) swapping food b) sharing drink bottles.
- Washing hands before and after eating.
- No food to be taken into the playground.

If you are a parent of a child requiring an Asthma or Anaphylaxis plan—please collect all relevant paperwork from the office and make a time with your child’s teacher to discuss the Action Plan, if necessary. These documents will require the authorisation of your Health Care Professional, and once completed will need to be returned to the school office.

Parents are required to note the expiry date of their child/ren’s medication — and to provide replacement medication when required.
HOMEWORK

Junior School (Prep – Year 2)

Homework will consist mainly of:
- reading activities to, with and by parents.
- simple extension tasks associated with classroom activities.
- gathering of additional information or materials.

Homework will generally not exceed 20 minutes per day and will not be set on weekends or during vacation periods.

Middle and Senior School (Years 3 – 6)

Homework may consist of:
- independent reading on a daily basis.
- tasks such as continuation of classroom work, projects and research tasks.
- unfinished classroom activities.

Homework will generally not exceed 30 minutes per day (Middle School) or 45 minutes per day (Senior School) and may be set during weekends.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Camps

Children’s experience and knowledge can be extended by taking them beyond the school boundaries or by inviting individuals or groups to visit the school. Excursions and Incursions are chosen to enhance authentic learning.

The camp program extends this experience, strengthening the relationships between teachers and children. It is hoped that good friendships, which are made at St Thomas More, are further strengthened at Camp.

Sports Days

Notices will be sent home during the year regarding all types of extra sporting events that your child may be involved in. We encourage all children to participate. Currently the Bluearth Sports Program complements our existing Physical Education curriculum.

Library

Students have library time once a week. Prep to Year 2 students need to bring a library bag on their Library day to store their books. Each year, the school participates in the Premier’s Reading Challenge, and all students are encouraged to participate.

School production

The school holds a production every second year (odd years) for all students. Tickets are purchased for this event. The next school production will be in 2015.

Instrumental Program

In grades 3 and 4, your child/ren will be enrolled in one of the instrument programs we provide. This gives your child/ren an opportunity to have a “hands-on” experience learning music. Each lesson is during school on Wednesdays (2014).

Band—flute, clarinet, saxophone, oboe, trumpet, drums—These instruments are taught by Rita Guenzel which incurs an extra cost—to families who choose to participate. She teaches half hour lessons in groups. If children would like to play in the band, Rita provides a thirty minute session at no extra cost to children already enrolled with her.

String—guitar, violin, cello—These instruments are taught by Jed Rowe and Gitta Green, which incurs an extra cost—to families who choose to participate. They teach for half hour lessons in groups.

Recorder—This is taught by our music teacher, Mrs Haritos and incurs no extra cost. She provides a recorder and book for those enrolled. As they move to upper grades they can continue their instrument lessons.

Masses & Liturgies

Each level attends a Sunday parish Mass once per year as well as a weekday Mass on a roster basis. Liturgies and Masses may be arranged for different times of the year eg: beginning/end of year school, St Thomas More feast day etc.
IN-SERVICE DAYS / STAFF MEETINGS

St Thomas More staff hold regular staff meetings and Professional Learning, each Wednesday and Thursday from 3.30 pm - 5.00 pm. (Staff will be unavailable for parent interviews at this time).

The Catholic Education Office encourages all staff to keep abreast of current educational trends through a variety of in-service and professional development programmes. Teacher in-service is the means by which we enrich the quality of education we offer your child. For this purpose you will be asked to keep your child home on in-service days during the year. You will always be notified of in-service dates well in advance.

ONLINE PARENT COMMUNICATION

With our hectic schedules these days, it’s great to know that we have effective ways to communicate with each other.

At St Thomas More, below are the main online methods used to communicate day to day events to families. It is worth noting, that due to the speed of changes that occur in technology we are constantly updating ways in which we communicate. Currently we are reviewing the benefits of a possible School App. With that in mind, we welcome feedback on ways in which we can better communicate to families.

- Newsletters
- Blogs for each class and specialist areas
- Website: http://www.smbelgrave.catholic.edu.au
- Email between students, teachers and home
- Group SMS to Parents
- On-line Parent/Teacher/Child Interview bookings
STUDENT INFORMATION

UNIFORMS
The St Thomas More School uniform is listed below. All items are available through the uniform shop, which is open between 8.30am - 9.00am every Tuesday and is located next to our staffroom. Order forms are available at the school office or from the school website - and can be completed and left with payment (cash or cheque only), for uniform shop parents to fill the order when they are next in. These parents will also make themselves available during shop times for any assistance.

- **Full school uniform** is to be worn on **Mondays, Thursday and Fridays**.
- **The school sport uniform** is to be worn by all children on the two allocated P E Days, **Tuesdays and Wednesdays**.

Parents are to inform the class teacher, if their child is not wearing their full uniform on any day.

Order forms are available at the school office

**BOYS & GIRLS**

**BOYS** *(Summer)*

- School Hat Terms 1 & 4
- Light blue Polo with logo
- Navy Shorts (girls have a choice of summer dress)
- Maroon windcheater with logo

**Boys** *(Winter)*

As above but with long navy trousers.

**GIRLS** *(Summer)*

- Navy socks
- Black shoes

**Girls** *(Winter)*

- Navy winter tunic or long navy trousers.
- Library/Swimming bags also available.

Jewellery is restricted to studs or sleepers, no bracelets and no necklaces. Hair accessories should be in school colours. Hair longer than shoulder length is to be tied up.

**SUN SMART POLICY**

St Thomas More follows the Sun-Smart code of practice for outdoor activities in summer. This means that all children are to wear the school uniform hat, not baseball caps, and apply themselves with sunscreen in Terms 1 & 4. An adult will assist those children who need help applying the sunscreen. Sunscreen will be available in classrooms in Terms 1 & 4.

**OUT OF UNIFORM DAYS**

If there is a deemed ‘non uniform’ day parents are asked to take into consideration the suitability of clothing. No thongs, shoes with heels or singlets. Broad brimmed hats in Term 1 and 4 - no caps.

**BUSES**

Children can travel to and from school by either the Belgrave South or Cockatoo bus. Names of students using the bus will be recorded daily. Students travelling on the bus will meet Bus Coordinator outside room 9 and 10 at the first bell. Those who travel on the buses must adhere to appropriate bus protocols. Students may be denied access to this service for repeated misbehaviour. If there is a change to the arrangements you have made with your child please contact the office as soon as changes are known.

Please contact the Bus Company directly for information on bus routes - (U.S. Bus Lines).

**HOT LUNCHES**

Hot lunches are made available for children to purchase each term, by the Parents and Friends Association. Order forms are sent home two weeks prior and need to be returned by the due date on the form (1 week prior to lunch date). Order form are to be attached to a brown paper bag with money enclosed. Volunteers are required to help between 11.00am and 2pm on the day.

**LUNCH—"The Environmental Way".**

Our school environment group has been encouraging everyone who brings play lunch and lunch to school, to bring it in tubs or reusable packaging. “We believe it is everyone’s responsibility to care for the earth.” Healthy lunches and ‘brain food’ snacks are also encouraged.
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

St Thomas More Education Board
The Education Board meets once a term. The Board's functions include assisting in the formulation of policy, planning for the future and supporting the school in practical ways. Through the Board, school/community relationships are developed and home school interaction encouraged.
Parents are encouraged to contact any Board member with suggestions or concerns that can be raised at meetings.
Board members are asked to commit to a two-year term, with elections being held yearly for approximately half of the positions. The Education Board consists of the Parish Priest, the Principal, teachers' representative, a representative of the Parents' Association and parent representatives.

St Thomas More Parents & Friends Association
The St Thomas More Parents & Friends Association provides an opportunity for parents to meet monthly and discuss various projects for the school, and arrange social events for the whole school community.
Parents also manage the uniform shop. The P & F also promote social interaction by welcoming new families to the school, by organising fund-raising events, by assisting and supporting families in the school community in times of need.

Morning cuppa in the staffroom
Parents are invited and welcomed to stay for a chat and a cuppa each morning in the staffroom until 9.30am. Please leave the staffroom free for the rest of the day for staff.

Casserole Bank
This is a service to needy families in the community run by volunteers. Casseroles are made and ‘banked’ for occasions that may arise for families who find themselves in a situation such as grief, illness etc. Co-ordinators names and contact details are available at the school office.

Buddy Family / Welcome Group
With permission, the Welcome Group matches new families to a ‘Buddy’ family to help assist you with the knowledge of school procedures and try to answer any questions you may have. We encourage all new families to be part of this initiative.

Helper in the Classroom
Parent participation is valued and encouraged at St Thomas More and assistance is required in: Writing, spelling, reading, special projects eg: craft, cooking, excursions, Library, photocopying, special sporting activities eg: Interschool Sports.

Literacy Course—The Literacy Co-ordinator invites parents/grandparents and guardians, to attend this specialist course held at the beginning of Term 1.

Working with Children Check
It is now a legal requirement for all school volunteers to undergo a Working With Children Check. Forms are available from the post office. Parents will not be allowed to help in classroom or excursions or swimming etc. without this check.

St Thomas More Maintenance Committee
The Maintenance Committee has the important job of organising repairs and maintenance to the school grounds and buildings.

During the year, the Maintenance Committee co-ordinates working bees. Families are notified through the school newsletter the dates these will be held. Those families who choose not to attend will incur a maintenance levy charge of $50.00.

Headlice Inspections
Head lice are a very common problem in schools. In an effort to control their spread, approximately once a term, a team of parents conducts a school wide head lice inspection. The inspections are conducted under the direction of a Shire appointed School Nurse. Confidentiality agreements are signed by all parents involved.

A First Aid Linen Cleaning Roster is also co-ordinated by a team of parents.
FEE SCHEDULE 2014
(the Fee Schedule is updated and issued to families in Term 4 of each year)

1) LEVY per student for 2014 (due by end of Term 4, 2013)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levy</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject Levy</td>
<td>Prep - 6</td>
<td>$238.00 per annum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Levy</td>
<td>Prep – 2</td>
<td>$40.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Grades 3 – 6</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) Additional Expenses for 2014 (to be paid by the end of Term 1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Camps</td>
<td>3 – 4</td>
<td>$290.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 – 6</td>
<td>$340.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swimming</td>
<td>Prep - 6</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3) FEES for 2014 (fees are due to be paid at the beginning of Terms 1, 2 & 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Type</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One child family</td>
<td>$1623.00 ($541.00 x 3 instalments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more children family</td>
<td>$1953.00 ($651.00 x 3 instalments)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Bee Levy: (per family)</td>
<td>$50.00 (rebated if a working bee is attended during the year)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These costs are the total expenditure families are expected to pay throughout the year, with exception being representative Inter-School sports and Grade 6 Graduation Fees.

How To Pay Your Account:

Option 1: Pay in full as specified above - Families are required to pay the Levies in Term 4, for the following year, with the balance of the School Fees invoiced at the beginning of Term 1, 2 and 3

Option 2: Payment by instalments, using Direct Debit with either your credit card or bank account (forms available from the office or on our website under Enrolment Information)

Option 3: Recipients of EMA can request that it be paid directly to the school to offset part of the Fees. (Information regarding EMA eligibility will be detailed in Term 1.)

Option 4: Online deposit direct to school bank account B/S/B 083-347 Account No:69904 8488 (Reference: Eldest child’s name )

Contact the school office on 9754 4444 if you have any concerns.

MAINTENANCE LEVY: (per family) $50.00
(Rebated if a working bee is attended during the year.) We ask all parents to attend a working bee on scheduled days or other times that suit them.

EDUCATION MAINTENANCE ALLOWANCE
Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is available to holders of a Centrelink HealthCare Card/ Pensioner Card and must be applied for through the school twice each year for those that are eligible.
Extend Out of Hours School Care
at
St Thomas More Primary School

Out of School Hours Care at St Thomas More is available from 3.30pm-6.00pm.

Currently, Before School Care is not available due to lack of numbers.

At the beginning of each year we review the interest of families in a Before School Care Program, and believe that in due course the program will become available to families. If your family would be interested in such a program, please notify the St Thomas More School office, whether it be for a casual or permanent basis.

For Call the Extend Enrolment Hotline for details or for a quote on what your fee will be per session for Out of School Hours Care. Or go to their website for the online calculator.

On-line applications are preferred, however application forms are available from the school office.
PARENTS' PRAYER

Lord here are our children, we give them to you. 
Reach out and touch them with the finger of your love. 
So that they will stop where they are, 
Sense your presence and turn to you.

Take them and make them what you want, 
not what we want. 
Call them to adventures you have planned for them 
not what we aspire for them.

Keep them from smallness of spirit, 
Help them to know themselves, 
and enjoy the person you created them to be. 
Help them to use their gifts to serve you.

Help them to plunge deep into the mystery of their 
union with you, and to love you above all things. 
And for us, help us to love them without possessiveness.

Help us to be firm, and to protect them when we must. 
Help us to be patient while they strive to find themselves. 
Help us to respect them for what you made them to be. 
Help us to guide them with your wisdom. 
Help us to love them whilst letting them go.

And when our work is done 
Help us to turn back to you and continue our journey. 
Wiser and more understanding of you and your way with each of us.