
St Mary's Catholic College Gateshead

BE SAFE, BE A LEARNER, BE RESPECTFUL

Newsletter 5.24

Thursday 28 March 2024



Principal's Message

Dear Parents, Carers and Community Members

As we approach the Easter season, I am filled with a sense of gratitude and joy. Easter is a time of reflection, renewal, and rejoicing in the gift of hope that it brings to our hearts.

In the midst of life's challenges and uncertainties, Easter reminds us of the enduring power of faith and the promise of new beginnings. It is a time to pause, to ponder, and to draw strength from the timeless message of love and redemption that Easter embodies. It is a time to also reflect on those people within our own lives, our wider community, and our world who are suffering and deprived of hope.

Who are the people that need our love, prayer, compassion, and service? Think of the people battling mental health disorders, homelessness, domestic violence, chronic illness, and disabilities. Think also of the men, women, and children in worn torn countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, and the Ukraine. May they find hope.

As members of our Catholic College community, we are blessed to journey together in faith, guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ. This Easter, let us embrace the spirit of compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation that Christ exemplified through His life, death, and resurrection. Let us extend a hand of kindness to those in need, offer words of encouragement to those facing hardship, and share the light of Christ's love with all whom we encounter.

On behalf of our College community, I extend warmest wishes for a blessed and joyous Easter.

Kind Regards,

Brett Donohoe
Principal

Ministry

Easter should challenge us to reflect on our engagement with the community of God's people (all People). In his book, *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future*, Pope Francis calls us to live out our baptismal vows more fully and place human dignity at the very centre of our efforts, with a particular focus on providing all people with “the three L's of land, lodging and labour, as well as education and healthcare”.

Pope Francis shows how ordinary people acting together, despite their differences, can discover unforeseen possibilities by being Christ present to others and by following the example of Jesus who gathered people around him with a message about a different way of living – a way of love, rather than of power; a way of healing rather than hurting; a way of collaboration rather than of competition. Truly, this is an amazing view of the way the world could be.

The Resurrection is a cause for joy and sharing Good News. The tomb is empty, Jesus is risen. The Holy Spirit will empower us to journey in truth and courage to share the love of God for all. Surely, a cause for amazement!

DeAnna Addicoat
Ministry Coordinator



Assistant Principal – Learning & Teaching



ST MARY'S
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GATESHEAD

26 March 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you in relation to the **Minimum Standards Tests for Year 10 students**. As you may be aware, the achievement of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Minimum Standards are prerequisite for students studying the HSC. NESA requires students to meet this standard in the following three areas: **Reading, Writing and Numeracy**, before they receive their HSC.

In 2024 the first round of testing for Year 10 students will be held in Week 10, immediately after Easter break, on **Tuesday 2nd April Period 3 and Wednesday 3 April Periods 1 and 4**.

Please note these are changes to the original periods published in Week 8.

We ask that all Year 10 students be present on these days.

The tests are administered online, and it is important that all students **bring their device, fully charged**, on **Tuesday 2nd April (immediately after Easter Monday break)**. Students in Year 10 will receive separate communication regarding the tests and are aware of **their responsibility in bringing their devices on this day**. Some support information is contained at the end of this letter.

In terms of the tests themselves, **each test runs for 45 minutes. The Reading and Numeracy tests will include 45 multiple choice questions and the Writing test will require your child to respond to a question based on a prompt or stimulus**. If your child has been diagnosed with a learning, sensory or physical disability, he/she will be provided with a fair opportunity to respond to the online literacy and numeracy tests as required.

Should you need further help in understanding the process, please click on the following link to learn more about the tests and the requirements:

<https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/hsc/minimum-standard>

Yours sincerely,

Belinda Flood
(Acting) Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching

Notes for Students in Preparing for the Minimum Standards Tests

Equipment:

You may take a **pen/pencil and a ruler** into the minimum standard tests. The test supervisor will provide blank paper once you enter the test room. You need a **fully charged device** and to have downloaded the **NESA Lockdown Browser (as per the emailed instructions.)**

The following items are not allowed in the examination room:

- Mobile phones, smartwatches, or programmable watches
- Calculators
- Dictionaries
- Notes

Test details:

Reading and Numeracy tests are in a multiple-choice question format (45 minutes).

Writing test is a typed response of approximately 500 words in response to a question or picture (maximum 45 minutes).

- You must stay on the test site for the duration of the test session.
- It is a breach of test rules to access other sites, use other applications or use a calculator other than the one provided within the test and that such action will be recorded.
- If any breach of test rules or malpractice is found to have occurred, including the writing of responses that are considered offensive, your test attempt may be declared invalid and you may not be permitted to re-sit the test for a period of up to 12 months.

On test day:

1. You will be given your PIN letter which contains the test URL, your student number and PIN to log in to the tests.
2. You must accept the conditions in order to sit the test.
3. When the supervisor tells you to start, read the instructions and log in using your student number and PIN.
4. You can then begin the test. The time that you have remaining to complete the test will display at all times on the top right hand corner of the page.
5. Once you have finished the test, select 'Submit and finish'.

NSW Education Standards Authority



Reading, writing and numeracy — skills for everyday life



The HSC minimum standard has been introduced to ensure students have the reading, writing and numeracy skills needed for everyday life, work and further study.

What this means for students

Students need to meet the HSC minimum standard to receive the HSC. To show they meet this standard, students need to achieve Level 3 in short online reading, writing and numeracy tests. Schools will help students to decide when they are ready to take each test. Students get six chances a year to sit each test if they are in year 12, and four chances a year in years 10 and 11. Students may take tests up to five years after successfully completing their first HSC course.

Only students who meet the HSC minimum standard will receive an HSC testamur.

Provisions and exemptions

Students do not need to meet the HSC minimum standard to:

- study HSC courses
- sit HSC exams
- receive HSC assessment and exam results
- receive an ATAR
- receive a Record of School Achievement.

Provisions are available for some students with disability. Some students with a disability studying Life Skills courses may also be exempt from meeting the minimum standard to receive their HSC testamur.

Find out more at educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/HSCminimumstandard





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 GATESHEAD

26 March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please find in Compass the Interim Report for your child relating to their first term of Year 7 - 11. The Interim Report is not a full academic report, this will be issued following the completion of Semester One. The purpose of this report is to provide parents and carers with meaningful and timely feedback regarding their child's commencement of the 2024 academic year.

Students in Years 7 - 11 have been assessed on their learning attributes not the academic results attained to date. These simple criteria have been applied, are self-explanatory and aim to give parents and carers a basic overview of their child's progress and the manner in which they have settled into their learning for 2024 here at St Mary's.

SMCCG Approaches to Learning - Being a safe, respectful learner
Independently motivated to learn
Is prepared with personal equipment
Demonstrates on task behaviour
Demonstrates persistence and initiative
Reflects on and employs feedback
Listens Respectfully
Respects the learning environment – teacher, students, space & resources

This report can be a basis of conversation with the student's teachers and, depending on trends identified, could be the source of intervention that leads to greater level of support being offered.

Bookings for Year 7 – 11 Student/Parent/Teacher (SPT) Conferences will be available via Compass from **Tuesday 26 March** and you are encouraged to take this opportunity to meet with your child and their teachers. **The SPT Conferences will be held over two days:**

- **Thursday 4th April 3.30pm – 7.00pm**
- **Friday 3rd April 8.00am – 2.00pm in The Josephite Centre and adjacent rooms.**

Students will be informed that they are expected to lead this conversation and they will be provided with a series of questions to guide this discussion. The guiding questions are:

- What am I learning?
- Why am I learning this?
- How am I doing?
- How do I know?
- How can I improve?
- Where can I go for help?

Continued ...

We trust that the information contained within the report is found to be useful and that the meeting with teachers proves to be very beneficial for your child. The College remains committed to the strong partnerships between school and home and we welcome your feedback and questions relating to this Interim Report and the transition to the 2024 school year.

Finally, please note that on **Friday 5th April classes for our Year 12 students will continue** as per the timetable. **Year 7-11 students will only attend school on this day at the time of their interviews.** There will be no supervision provided to Year 7-11 students on this day.

Your sincerely,



Cathy O'Gorman
Assistant Principal – Learning and Teaching

Assistant Principal – Wellbeing and Engagement

Schools TV

Because parenting doesn't come with instructions, SchoolTV is a wellbeing resource implemented at our school to help support you in the challenges of modern-day parenting relating to youth mental health and wellbeing.



Parenting is a learning journey and SchoolTV supports families by providing credible information from trusted sources with practical strategies to help alleviate some of the challenges being faced by young people today. Watch video interviews with leading wellbeing specialists and browse a library of resources. Each topic is accompanied by factsheets, podcasts, books, articles, apps and other videos.

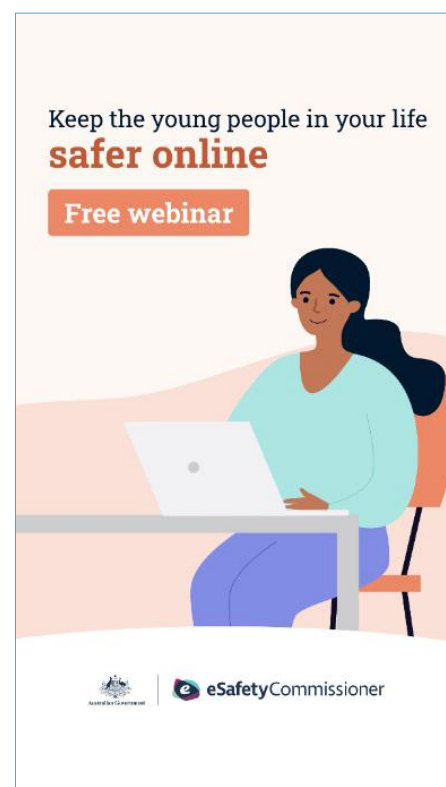
This award-winning resource helps families build relationships, foster connections, enable understanding and break down barriers to navigate a pathway towards better mental health and wellbeing for young people. It will assist you in starting those conversations on topics that can sometimes be awkward or difficult to tackle. Parents and caregivers are the greatest influence on a young person's life and SchoolTV focuses on empowering confident parenting. Explore SchoolTV today via the link on the College website.



We hope to see you online at our upcoming Term 1 eSafety Commissioner cybersafety talk for parents. This session is called Understanding parental controls to safeguard your child and is suitable for parents of primary school students.

If you haven't already, please register here:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3100911298333648471>



Leader of Wellbeing & Engagement – Year 10

On Tuesday morning, March 19th, Year 10 gathered in the TJC for the induction of our 2024 House Captains. Congratulations are extended to the following students who have already proven themselves to be great leaders at the Swimming Carnival and Athletics Carnival and other sporting activities, including Service Wednesdays, throughout the year. These students will be formally presented to the entire student population at the next full school assembly.

Smith (Red)	Chisholm (Green)	Kenny (Blue)	Simpson (Yellow)
Oliver Evans Reuben Pedonese Harry Kearney Xavier Browne	Dylan Wilks Beah Ronje Scarlett Fox Jordan Bika Kiara Barr	Henry Barnett Will Davis Yanisse Manga Molo Angus Nagle Victoria Dugomanov	Chloe Hillard Talia Higgins Molly McLachlan Ella Macnamara

Chisholm House



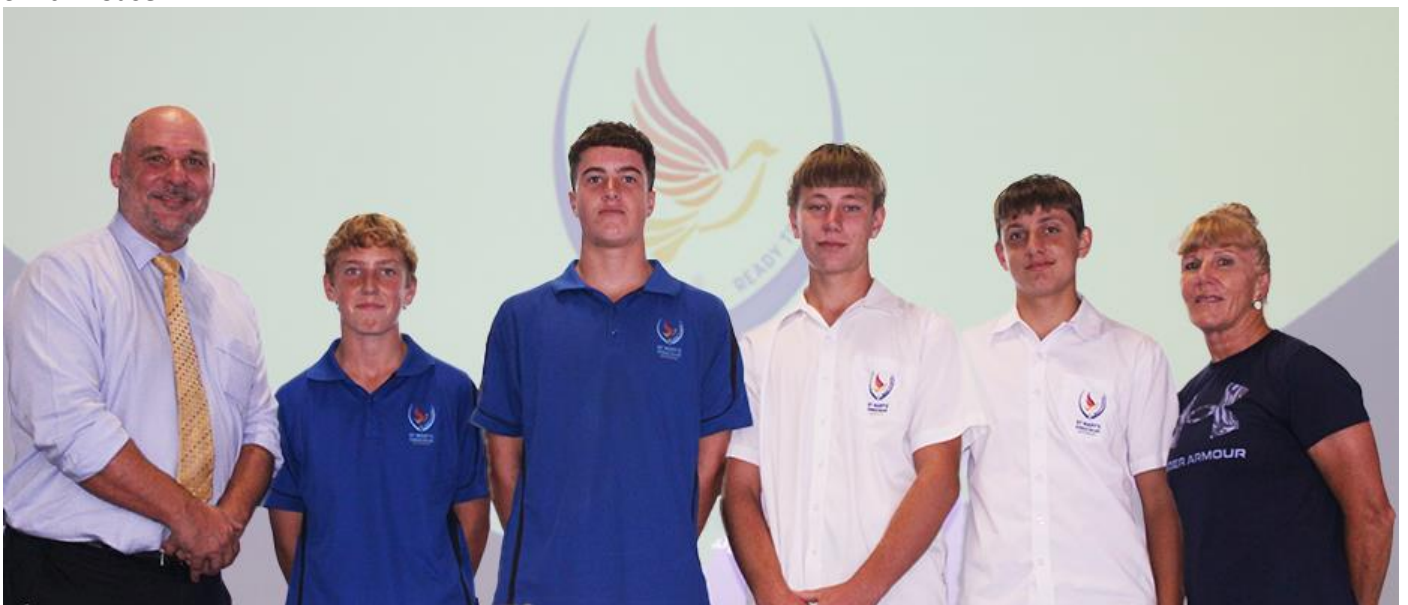
Kenny House



Simpson House



Smith House



Katrina Brennan
Leader of Wellbeing & Engagement – Year 10

Student Pastoral Council

The Student Council nominations process has now been finalised. Congratulations extend to those students listed below.

Throughout the process, students attended the **"What is Leadership?"** session with Brett Donohoe - Principal, Cathy O’Gorman – Assistant Principal L&T, and me, as well as a group meeting with their LoWE and/or myself. I am proud to say that we have seen a significant increase in both numbers and diversity of our students, this achievement is due to staff involvement and impactful conversations with our students.

We have assembled a fantastic group of students who are eager to serve in student leadership roles. Congratulations to all – **“Ready to Serve”**.

Year 8:

Mitchell Bannister, Lachlan Dean, Jack Clarke, Charlie Cummings, Ella Graham, Samara Oakley

Year 9:

Joe Boylan, Kian Milani, Leo McColl, Henry Davey, Jack Foster, Xanthia Waddell, Molly Wade, Rebecca Visscher, Ava Hungerford, Madi Gregory, Katie Dowling, Na McKay, Victoria Chong, Matilda Knowles

Year 10:

Garvish Gulati, Brodie Dean, Cooper Cousins, Jordan Bika, Mason Chorley, Reuben Pedonese, Scarlett Fox, Angela Johnson, Ariella Doyle, Ava Lloyd, Olivia Brown, Kiara Barr, Abbey Toshack, Sairose Vickers

Year 11:

Ben Breasley, Julian Egan, Finn Callan, James Bernasconi, Dylan Dunkley, Toby Maloney, Elle Benson, Abi Paterson, Olivia Jenkins, Ella Smith, Macy Nash

Louise Hatcher
SPC Coordinator

International Marine Prowess

Madison Hillard a St Mary's student from Year 12 2022, has just been hand-picked to be a state representative for the New Colombo Plan which is an Australian Government initiative.

In addition to her Marine Studies in Tasmania, she has just completed her deep-sea scuba dive course last week and was elected as Sustainability Officer for the UTAS student accommodation at The University of Tasmania.



Pelvic Pain Talk

On Tuesday 26 March 2024, the Pelvic Pain Foundation delivered a presentation to all Year 10 students about endometriosis. Boys and girls experienced different presentations that were appropriate to their gender and age, all with the intention of educating them about the causes, symptoms and treatment for endometriosis, a health condition that may impact them or their partner in future years. I would encourage parents to follow up at home in a conversation with your child about this very important health issue.



Katrina Brennan
 Leader of Wellbeing and Engagement – Year 10

2024 Focus Bikes NSW Schools Mountain Bike XCO Championships - Held in Glenrock on Friday 21st March 2024.

Congratulations to the following students who competed in in last week's school mountain bike competition:



Cross Country Race

- Cameron Cannon, 12 yrs , Year 7 - 2nd
- Nicolas Drummond, 13 yrs, Year 7 - 2nd
- Jed Shaw, Year 8 - 47th
- Brodie Dean, Year 10 - 3rd
- Patrick Milajew, Year 10 - 23rd



Funduro Competition

- Nic Drummond 1st
- Jed Shaw 5th
- Brodie Dean 4th
- Patrick Milajew 10th

The school came 8th out of a significant number of schools in the Hunter and North Coast Region. With only five students riding this was an excellent result.

Careers Corner

White Card Completed

We had two groups of students from Year 10 and 11 successfully complete their white card in last week. The students committed themselves to the day and the College received positive feedback from the Registered Training Organisation about their respectful engagement. Congratulations to the 35 participants.

Paula Finlay

Careers & VET Coordinator



Da Vinci Decathlon

On Tuesday 19th March (Years 7 & 8) and Wednesday 20th March (Years 9 & 10), St Mary's teams made their way to Bishop Tyrrell College to take part in the annual Da Vinci Decathlon. The Da Vinci Decathlon is an academic competition designed to challenge and stimulate the minds of school students. Students compete in teams of 8 across 10 disciplines in engineering, mathematics and chess, code breaking, art and poetry, science, English, ideation, creative producers, cartography, and legacy.

All teams were exceptional throughout the day of higher-order thinking and problem-solving. A fantastic time was had by all year groups, we congratulate the following for their excellent results:

- Year 8 group winning the Spirit Award
- Year 10 - 2nd Overall
1st Creative Producers
2nd Science
2nd Legacy
3rd Mathematics
3rd Cartography
=3rd Code Breaking
- Year 9/10
2nd Mathematics
2nd Engineering



Tarryn Wilson and Alicia Lang – Da Vinci Decathlon Coordinators

Library Matters

Where did the time go! We are in the back end of the term and the pace is still pretty hectic. Each week we have had some wonderful community activities in the library that have had a large number of students in attendance; and what fun we have had!

With the valuable input from Ms Watt and Ms Laughton, your Library team has provided craft activities, games and competitions to help bring our students together, meeting new friends and learning how to spend time away from their phone screens. So, don't panic if you hear that your son or daughter has spent their lunch breaks in the library. Rest assured it is the happening place to be!



Mrs Rosalind Dunn
Teacher Librarian

You meet all sorts at the Athletics Carnival..... 😊



Easter fun at St Mary's Café!

Raffles, Eggs, Milkshakes! Congratulations to Petty Sofianos, who won the Easter Freak Shake Raffle. She kindly donated the shake to Maddi Lush, who volunteers in the café. Thank you to everyone who supported the raffle. We raised \$94 for Project Compassion.



Easter Mass Times and Venues

Suburb	Church	Liturgical Times/Date 2024
Swansea	St Patrick's	Saturday, 23 March - Palm (Passion) Vigil 6.00pm
Windale Belmont	St Pius X St Francis Xavier	Sunday, 24 March - Palm (Passion) Vigil 7.30am Palm (Passion) Vigil 9.00am
Belmont	St Francis Xavier	Monday 25 March - Weekday Mass 8.30am
Hamilton	Sacred Heart Cathedral	Tuesday 26 March – Chrism Mass 7.00pm
Swansea	St Patrick's	Wednesday 27 March – Weekday Mass 8.30am
Charlestown 9pm	St Mary Immaculate St Pius X	Holy Thursday, 28 March - Mass 7pm, Adoration until Mass of the Lord's Supper – 7.00pm
Warners Bay Toronto Morisset	St Mary's WB St Joseph's Kilaben Bay St John Vianney	Holy Thursday, 28 March – 7.00pm Holy Thursday, 28 March – 7.00pm Holy Thursday, 28 March – 7.00pm
Charlestown	St Mary Immaculate	Good Friday, 29 March - Stations of the Cross 10am, Lord's Passion 3.00pm
Windale Belmont Warners Bay	St Pius X St Francis Xavier St Mary's WB	Way of the Cross 10.00am Friday of the Passion of the Lord 3.00pm Good Friday, 29 March – Stations 10am Service – 3pm
Toronto Morisset	St Joseph's Kilaben Bay St John Vianney	Good Friday 3.00pm Good Friday 3.00pm
Charlestown Windale Swansea Warners Bay Toronto Morisset	St Mary Immaculate St Pius X St Patrick's St Mary's WB St Joseph's Kilaben Bay St John Vianney	Holy Saturday, 30 March - Easter Vigil Mass 7.00pm Morning Prayer 9.30am Mass – Easter Vigil 6.00pm Easter Saturday Vigil 6.30pm Easter Saturday Vigil 6.00pm Easter Saturday Vigil 6.00pm
Charlestown Windale Belmont Warners Bay Booragul Toronto Morisset	St Mary Immaculate St Pius X St Francis Xavier St Mary's WB St Michael the Archangel St Joseph's Kilaben Bay St John Vianney	Easter Sunday, 31 March - Mass 8am, Mass 9.30am Mass – Easter Sunday 7.30am Mass – Easter Sunday 9.00am Easter Sunday 8.00am Easter Sunday 10.00am Easter Sunday 9.00am Easter Sunday 9.30am

CALENDAR Term 1 2024	
Week 8 (B Week)	
Fri 29 March	Good Friday – Pupil Free
Week 10 – (B Week)	
Mon 1 April	Easter Monday – Pupil Free
Tues 2 April	Year 11 Biology & Geography excursion Year 10 MS Testing Round 1 Year 7-11 Conference Bookings close
Thurs 4 April	Year 12 Geography excursion Year 7-11 Parent Student Teacher conferences – 3.30pm to 7.00pm
Fri 5 April	Year 7-11 Parent Student Teacher conferences 8.00am – 2.00pm – Pupil Free Day – Year 12 have classes as normal Year 12 VET Construction Tiling incursion
Week 11 – (A Week)	
Tues 9 April	Combined Schools ANZAC Event Landcare
Wed 10 April	Science & Engineering Challenge Hunter Water incursion Brainstorm Productions – Years 7 to 10
Thurs 11 April	Year 10 Luna Park excursion
Fri 12 April	Year 11 Visual Art excursion – Sydney Biennale TBC Newsletter 6.24 End of Term 1
TERM 2 - Week 1 – (A Week)	
Mon 29 April	Year 12 Retreat (Group 1) to Wednesday 1 May – see Compass for more details Return to school for Term 2
Wed 1 May	Year 12 Retreat (Group 2) to Friday 3 May – see Compass for more details ANZAC Assembly
Thurs 2 May	Year 10 Geography Field Trip - TBC
Week 2 – (B Week)	
Tues 7 May	U18 Boys & Girls Rugby League TBC Extended Professional Development for Teachers – Students released at 2.40pm
Thurs 9 May	National Indigenous Tennis Carnival – TBC Landcare Year 12 Conference Bookings open
Fri 10 May	College Leaders Morning Tea with local Member for Charlestown Newsletter 7.24
Week 3 – (A Week)	
Mon 13 May	Year 7 King Tut Truck incursion
Tues 14 May	U13 Knights Knockout TBC
Wed 15 May	Year 12 Visual Art excursion – Sydney Biennale TBC
Thurs 16 May	Careers Expo
Fri 17 May	Year 7 Formation Day - TBC
Week 4 – (B Week)	
Mon 13 May	Year 12 PST Conferences – 3.30pm to 7pm – more details to follow Murrook Cultural excursion
Tues 14 May	Extended Professional Development for Teachers – Students released at 2.40pm
Wed 15 May	Inquisitive Minds incursion – Year 8
Thurs 16 May	U15 Boys Rugby League – TBC Newsletter 8.24
Fri 17 May	Pupil Free Day - Staff Formation Day

COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION

St Mary's Catholic College, the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) and Schools in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are committed to providing a positive, safe environment for all staff and students. There are occasions however, when members of our schools and wider community are concerned about something happening at a school that appears to be unsatisfactory or unreasonable. If you have a complaint, please follow this procedure:

<https://www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/complaints-resolution-and-feedback/>