Dear Parents and Carers

The staff of St Patrick’s welcomes you to our school. We hope you will find your association with our school to be both happy and rewarding.

St Patrick’s provides an education for children in the Parish of Jesus the Good Shepherd, East Lake Macquarie. We have a firm commitment to creating and fostering a caring community where parents, teachers and students work together in mutual support and respect. It is this community aspect of the faith we share that sets the tone of our Catholic school.

The primary goal of our school is to provide a sound education in a Christian environment. We aim to achieve this goal by bringing the person and the message of Jesus Christ into our daily work with the students and their families. Whilst Religious Education lessons are taught for part of each day, Christianity is a way of living which should influence every aspect of our school life. We strive to deepen each child's knowledge and understanding of the Catholic faith and to develop a climate that will help our children to grow in their faith relationship with Christ.

Our Religious Education program is based on the Maitland/Newcastle Diocesan Religious Education units, which have been developed specifically to meet the needs of the students attending our diocesan schools.

Our students are invited to participate in parish-based sacramental programs. Students from Year 2 onwards are eligible to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Students from Year 3 onwards are eligible to receive the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Holy Communion. Brochures outlining the parish sacramental programs are located in our parish churches at Swansea, Belmont and Windale.

Parents are the first and primary educators of their children in the faith, and the family plays a major part in the child’s preparation for the reception of these sacraments. As parents, it is your witness and commitment that lays the foundation for your child's Christian formation. We aim to support you and your child as you walk together this journey in faith.

This booklet is designed to introduce you to our school, its policies and procedures. Take time to read it carefully and keep it handy for ready reference.

Peter Green
Principal
CONTENTS

Contact information ................................................................. 4
Our Vision Statement ................................................................. 4
Our Mission Statement ................................................................. 4
Our school prayer .......................................................................... 4
Our school song ........................................................................ 4
Curriculum .................................................................................. 5
Communication between home and school ...................................... 6
Child protection ........................................................................... 6
Parents’ and carers’ code of conduct ............................................ 7
Bullying ....................................................................................... 7
Procedures for investigating conflicts at school ................................ 8
School uniform ............................................................................. 9

School procedures and protocols
   Absences from school .......................................................... 10
   Administration of medicine and first aid ................................... 10
   Aerosol cans ........................................................................ 10
   ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day ....................................... 11
   Assemblies ......................................................................... 11
   Behaviour management ....................................................... 11
   Bell times .......................................................................... 11
   Book club ......................................................................... 11
   Buses ............................................................................... 11
   Canteen ............................................................................ 11
   Collection of money and notes ............................................ 11
   Evacuation and lockdown drills ........................................... 12
   Excursions ........................................................................ 12
   Homework ......................................................................... 12
   Infectious diseases ............................................................ 12
   Jewellery and make-up ........................................................ 12
   Library ............................................................................ 12
   Lost property ..................................................................... 13
   Masses and liturgies ............................................................ 13
   Mission activities ................................................................. 13
   Out-Of-School Hours Care (OOSH) ....................................... 13
   Parents and Friends Association .......................................... 13
   Parking ............................................................................ 13
   Pastoral care ...................................................................... 13
   Photographs of children ...................................................... 14
   Public speaking .................................................................. 14
   Recycling .......................................................................... 14
   Release from face-to-face teaching ....................................... 14
   School, fees ....................................................................... 14
   Signing in and signing out .................................................. 14
   Staff development days ...................................................... 14
Student leadership .......................................................... 15
Sunsense ........................................................................ 15
Tenison Apartments ......................................................... 15
Volunteering ................................................................... 15
Website and app ............................................................... 15

Especially for our new Kinders
Getting ready for school .................................................. 16
Settling into school ......................................................... 16

Appendix 1: NSW Foundation Handwriting script .................................................. 18
Appendix 2: Commencement of the Crimes Amendment (Schools Protection Act) .......... 19
Appendix 4: Reporting to the police ................................................................. 20
Appendix 5: Inclosed Lands Protection Act (1901) ................................................ 20
CONTACT INFORMATION
Street address: 213 Northcote Avenue, Swansea. 2281.
Postal Address: P.O. Box 141, Swansea. 2281.
Telephone number: (02) 49711560
Fax number: (02) 49720123
Email address: admin@swansea.mn.catholic.edu.au
Website: http://www.swansea.catholic.edu.au

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Commences</th>
<th>Finishes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday 29th January: Staff returns. Tuesday 30th January: Years 1 to 6 students return. Wednesday 31st January: Kindergarten students begin.</td>
<td>Friday 12th April</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Monday 29th April</td>
<td>Friday 5th July</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Monday 22nd July</td>
<td>Friday 27th September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Monday 14th October</td>
<td>Thursday 19th December</td>
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OUR VISION STATEMENT
St Patrick’s School is a place of quality education, opportunity and growth. In a community of faith and love, we bring out the best in one another.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT
Therefore we will:
- Inspire our community to be a people of Jesus.
- Provide an educational experience that is grounded in the history and traditions of the Sisters of St Joseph.
- Create a learning environment where everyone is challenged and supported, and where each new day is an opportunity to learn, grow and succeed in mind, body and spirit.
- Acknowledge and celebrate the diversity within the community.
- Equip students with the skills and knowledge to thrive in an ever-changing and challenging society.
At St Patrick’s School, we are nurtured and encouraged to develop our talents and achieve our best.

OUR SCHOOL PRAYER
This is our school, let peace abide here. Let the rooms be full of contentment. Let love abide here, love of one another, love of mankind, love of life itself and love of God. Let us remember that, as many hands build a house, so many hearts make a school.

OUR SCHOOL SONG: “ASPIRE TO THE EXTRAORDINARY”

Chorus: St Patrick’s, St Patrick’s, the school by the sea.
St Patrick, our patron, bring out the best in me.
Bring out the best in me.

1. We will learn to “grow in hope”
   That’s what we strive to do.
   Live and learn as Jesus shows
   The Gospel values.
   Here at . . . (Chorus)

2. Together walking side by side
   Our school community
   Moving forward right into
The 21st Century.
Here at . . . (Chorus)

3. When I go out into the world
Another step for me,
I'll look ahead and know I can be
Extraordinary (I am!) Extraordinary
Here at . . . (Chorus)

**CURRICULUM**
- The curriculum at St Patrick’s encompasses Religious Education and the six Key Learning Areas as prescribed by the New South Wales Board of Studies. The Key Learning Areas are:
  1. Religious Education.
  2. English, which includes Speaking & Listening, Reading & Viewing, and Writing & Representing.
  4. Human Society and Its Environment, which includes History and Geography.
  5. Science and Technology.
  6. Personal Development, Health and Physical Education.
  7. Creative Arts.
- With the assistance of the Catholic Schools Office and external agencies, St Patrick’s aims to cater inclusively for children with additional needs.
- The Religious Education program is divided into four strands:
  - History and Beliefs
  - Justice and Values
  - Prayer, Liturgy, Seasons and Sacraments
  - Scripture and Jesus
- In accordance with Diocesan policy, the sacramental programs are parish-based programs. Through the units of work in the school's Religious Education program, St Patrick’s Catholic School supports the sacramental programs.
- The reading programs that we use include:
  - *Lexia*, a technology-based reading intervention program.
  - *Initialit*, a whole class literacy program which aims to provide students from Kindergarten to Year 2 with the essential core knowledge and strong foundations to become successful readers and writers.
  - *Minilit*, an early literacy program which targets the bottom 25% of students and which is specifically aimed at struggling Year 1 readers.
- We have a specialist music teacher. In Years 5 and 6, many musical concepts are covered through a ukulele program. We have a small group of students who form a ukulele performance group which performs in public recitals such as *Swanfest*, the Newcastle ukulele festival (*Newkulele*) and the Central Coast Ukelele Festival. Every second year we put on a school musical. In 2017, our show was called “A Night On Broadway”, which included a selection of songs and dances from *The Wizard of Oz, The Lion King, Mary Poppins, Annie, Grease* and *Hairspray*. The students of Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to participate in ASPIRE, an initiative of the Catholic Schools Office to showcase the talents of students in music, singing, dance and drama.
- The students also have the opportunity to learn a musical instrument from an organisation called *The Music Bus*, which teaches keyboard, guitar, ukulele, drums and singing. The lessons are taught once per week in a hi-tech mobile classroom that visits the school. This is an optional program.
- The school’s Visual Arts program exposes students to a variety of artistic techniques. These techniques include drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, digital art, fibre, photography and ceramics. During the weeks leading up to St Patrick’s Day each year, the school runs a St Patrick’s Day art competition. The winning artworks are displayed in the school foyer.
- Our sport program includes athletics, swimming, team sports, dance and gymnastics. Following our school's cross country (Term 1), athletics carnival (Term 2) and swimming carnival (Term 4), our students have opportunities to represent their region and their diocese at carnivals and, ultimately, for those who excel, to represent at state level. Our students also have the opportunity to
represent their diocese in a range of summer and winter sports.

- **During Term 1 each year, Thursday is the designated sport day at St Patrick’s for all students.**
- **During Terms 2, 3 and 4, Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2 do their sport lessons on Thursdays.**
- **During Terms 2, 3 and 4, Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 do their sport lesson on Fridays.**
- **The students wear their sport uniform on their sport day, and their regular uniform on all other days.**
- **If a medical condition prevents your child from participating in sport lessons, you are requested to write a letter to your child’s teacher, requesting exemption from the lesson.**
- **For the purpose of whole school sporting events, the students are divided into three house teams: Seagulls, Pelicans and Swans. Siblings belong to the same team.**
- **During Term 4 every year, our Year Two students engage in an intensive two-week swimming program.**

**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL**

- **Meeting with the principal:** For a brief chat, feel free to approach the principal. If you wish to discuss a matter that is likely to take more than a few minutes, it is advisable to make an appointment. If you have any concerns regarding your child, the first point of contact should be your child’s teacher. If further clarification is required, or if an issue is not resolved, please make an appointment to meet with the principal.
- **Meeting with teachers:** If you wish to speak to your child’s class teacher, he/she is usually available before and after school. We prefer that you make an appointment with the teacher if the matter is likely to take more than a few minutes. Teachers are not free to speak with parents during class time.
- **School app:** We frequently communicate last-minute messages and reminders to the school community via the school app. The app also alerts subscribers when the school newsletter is available online. The app can be installed free-of-charge onto your smart phone or smart device. On our homepage there is a link to the instructions for installing the app on your device.
- **School newsletter:** The school newsletter is published each Tuesday and is accessed electronically through our school website and our school app. Please read the newsletter as it contains important information about upcoming school and parish events, as well as general interest items about the school community.
- **Parent information meetings:** These meetings take place early in Term One each year. At these meetings, the teachers outline the intended yearly programme for each class. Teachers are also able to answer any queries that parents may have about class protocols.
- **Academic reports:** At the end of Terms Two and Four, parents will receive a report detailing their children’s academic progress, as well as their children’s personal and social development and work habits. At the end of Terms One and Three, parents receive an interim report which reports on each child’s personal and social development and work habits. Parents and teachers should avail themselves of the opportunity to follow up on these reports with a parent-teacher interview if necessary.

**CHILD PROTECTION**

The Catholic Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle has an absolute and abiding commitment to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children. As a parent sending your child or children to a Diocesan school, you should be aware of your rights and obligations in protecting your child and all children in our schools.

- **The Children and Young Person’s (Care and Protection) Act 1998:** In NSW we are able to report certain information to Family and Community Services (FaCS). If you are concerned for one of more of the children in the school, you can discuss your concerns with either a teacher, the assistant principal or the principal. You may report your concerns to the FaCS Child Protection Helpline (phone 133 627, 24 hours/7 days) if you have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm and if your concerns are current. Risk of significant harm may occur from a single act or omission or to a series of acts or omissions. It is better to be safe than sorry, so if you are uncertain, talk to a staff member at the school.
- **Part 3A of the Ombudsman Act 1974:** Part 3A Ombudsman Act 1974 defines Diocesan schools as a ‘designated non-government agency’ and, as such, we must have systems for preventing, reporting (to the Ombudsman) and investigating reportable conduct. All staff and volunteers in Diocesan schools fall within the scope of Part 3A and may be investigated for alleged ‘reportable conduct’, which includes sexual offences, misconduct, assault, ill-treatment, neglect and behaviour that causes psychological harm to children. Zimmerman Services is the Diocese’s specialist child protection service which works with the
Ombudsman to ensure that the Diocese meets its obligations under Part 3A.

- **The Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012**: Under this legislation, people who work in a paid or volunteer capacity in the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle are required by law to have a Working with Children Check Clearance. This ‘Clearance’ can be obtained from applying online at check@kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au. As a parent or carer, if you learn about a staff member or a volunteer working in the school without a Clearance, you should talk with the principal or assistant principal as soon as possible. If you believe that nothing is being done about your concerns, you may contact Zimmerman Services directly (phone 4979 1390, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5.00pm).

- **Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Reporting Policy**: As a parent you may report any concerns you have for a student, or group of students, to our principal, assistant principal, or directly to Zimmerman Services (phone 4979 1390, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5.00pm). The Diocese’s reporting policy and procedures are available to everyone on the Diocesan website at Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Reporting Child Protection Concerns. As parents, you are entitled to contact Zimmerman Services directly about any concerns you have about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child, or if you are concerned that the school is not addressing allegations of reportable conduct or abuse. (Phone 4979 1390, Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5.00pm).

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ CODE OF CONDUCT**

Parents/Carers and volunteers in Catholic school communities agree to:

- Understand and abide by all diocesan policies, procedures and guidelines, which are available on the CSO website www.mn.catholic.edu.au/about/policies.
- Model positive behaviour to their child and all children in the school community.
- Ensure children attend school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an active interest in their child’s school and their learning and to engage positively in all aspects of their child’s learning.
- Participate in the liturgical and faith life community of the school, including participation in all aspects of the Religious Studies program regardless of personal beliefs.
- Work in a positive manner with the school to achieve the best outcomes for their children.
- Communicate constructively, respectfully and in a spirit of partnership with the school and use processes and protocols outlined in the CSO Complaints Resolution Policy documents when raising concerns.
- Communicate with their child’s teacher or the principal directly regarding any concerns about their child, other students, staff or community members.
- Reject aggressive, abusive and confrontational language and behaviour, as this is counterproductive to the sustainability of any relationship. Approaching students, community members and/or staff in a confronting manner will not be tolerated.
- Support all school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- Treat all school staff, students, other members of the school community, visitors and volunteers with respect in all dealings with them both personally and through the use of all social media technologies at all times.
- Discuss with the principal any barriers to meeting the financial obligations agreed to at the time of enrolment and seek to form an agreement with the school to meet these.
- Ensure any agreement made with the school is honoured.

**BULLYING**

- **Rationale**: “We are made in the image and likeness of God” (Genesis 1:27) and at the core of the Church’s pastoral action is a deep respect for the innate dignity and uniqueness of the individual person. Bullying is not acceptable. Bullying can impact on the capacity of children to achieve their God-given potential. St Patrick’s School is committed to developing a positive, supportive, physically and psychologically safe school.

- **Definition of bullying**: Bullying is repeated and systematic attacks on others. It often occurs where there is a power imbalance. It can include psychological and/or physical attack. Bullying can often be invisible to adults but very obvious to children. Bullying differs from harassment in terms of occurrence; harassment can occur as a single incident whereas bullying is characterised by repeated attacks.

- **What can the school do?** The school has an anti-bullying policy. We have a zero tolerance policy of harassment and bullying. We promote a culture of peace where conflicts can be resolved without aggression.
and we give generous praise for pro-social and helpful behaviour. Parents will be notified if their children are involved with bullying, and immediate and appropriate action will be taken according to our Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy.

**PROCEDURES FOR INVESTIGATING CONFLICTS AT SCHOOL**

It is not uncommon for children to have accidents or to get into the odd argument or fight. Such incidents can lead to high emotions both at home and at school. We ask children and parents to apply the following guidelines:

**For Children**
- Tell a teacher when you are injured, upset or feeling insecure.
- If the teacher is busy, go to the school office and tell another teacher or tell your classroom teacher when you go to class.
- Tell the truth, even if you may be at fault.

**For Parents**
- **Step 1**: Complaints and grievances should be raised at the earliest possible time. Classroom based complaints and grievances should be raised with the student’s class teacher. All other complaints and grievances should be directed to the principal and/or their delegate.
- **Step 2**: If the classroom based complaint and grievance is not resolved by the teacher, direct the complaint/grievance to the principal and/or delegate.
- **Step 3**: If a complaint or grievance is not resolved by the principal after all efforts have been made to do so, or the complaint or grievance is about the principal, the parent/carer should refer the concern to the Catholic Schools Office via the parent liaison officer. (Phone 49791303 or 0409791303).
- **Step 4**: If a complaint or grievance remains unresolved, the parent/carer or the assistant director may refer the matter to the Director of Schools for review. A formal avenue of appeal is available in accordance with the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy. All such appeals should be made to the Director of Schools in writing and in a timely manner.
- **Step 5**: If, ultimately, the parent/carer is not happy with the way their complaint or grievance has been dealt with by the school or the Catholic Schools Office, they may wish to go to an external agency or legal advocate for advice and assistance.

**Notes**
- There may be a number of investigations proceeding that you are unaware of, all of which require care and thorough attention. Simply because a result is not immediately forthcoming does not mean that the issue is not being dealt with.
- Investigations do not happen in a vacuum. Schools are busy places, and your patience is appreciated. Decisions about discipline that are made in haste can be the wrong decisions.
- The manner in which we deal with issues in school teaches children skills about how to make better choices in real life. It is about choice and consequences, not damning children. You may wish to express your indignation, but all children make mistakes. It could be your child tomorrow. Copies of our Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy are available on our website or on request from the office.
- The Catholic Schools Office Complaints and Grievances Resolution Policy, which the school has adopted, can be found on our school website.
New and pre-loved uniform items can be purchased from the St Patrick’s uniform shop, which is open every Friday from 8.30am to 9.30am. The shop is located in the school hall. You do not have to come to the uniform shop to place an order. There is a price list and an order form on our website at https://bit.ly/2NGBpLs. Orders with payment can also be sent to the school office in an envelope marked with your child’s name and class. We will package your order for you and send it to the office for you or your child to collect.

All students are expected to wear the school uniform correctly. The correct school uniform is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Girl’s Uniform</td>
<td>Blue dress with inverted pleat (front and back) or Navy blue skirt and sky blue school-crested blouse White ankle socks Black leather lace-up or buckle shoes that are able to be polished School hat</td>
<td>Grey shorts (Cargo shorts are not an acceptable alternative to the school uniform) Blue shirt (short sleeves) Grey ankle socks Black leather lace-up or elasticised shoes that are able to be polished School hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter</td>
<td>Grey and blue tunic Pale blue long-sleeved blouse with Peter Pan collar</td>
<td>Long grey trousers Blue long-sleeved shirt School tie Grey socks Black leather lace-up or elasticized shoes that are able to be polished Fleecy navy zipper jacket or School tracksuit jacket School hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport days</td>
<td>Navy shorts bearing the St Patrick’s name Sky blue and navy sports polo shirt White ankle socks Joggers, runners or cross-trainer style shoes School tracksuit School hat</td>
<td>Navy shorts bearing the St Patrick’s name Sky blue and navy sports polo shirt White ankle socks Joggers, runners or cross-trainer style shoes School tracksuit School hat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note that the shoes worn with the summer and winter uniforms are **black leather lace-up, elasticised or buckle shoes that are able to be polished**. Please do not be persuaded by your children to purchase anything other than these shoes.

Girls’ shoes should be of a suitable height that will allow them to engage in physical activity safely. Shoes that are rarely or never polished look terrible and they do not last as long as shoes that are cared for. Children (even young ones) should be expected to polish their own shoes at least weekly.

The only additional item of clothing permitted to be worn is a warm jacket during exceptionally cold weather.
1. **Absences from school**
   - When your child needs to be absent from school, you are asked to write a letter to your child’s teacher outlining the reason for the absence. You may also notify the school of your child’s absence via email or through the ‘Parent eForm’ on the school app. You must notify the school within seven days of the absence. If this is not done, the absence is marked as ‘Unexplained’.
   - For any absences longer than 10 consecutive days, parents must apply in writing to the principal for an exemption from the legal requirement to attend school. The form that the parent must complete is available from the school office, as well as on our website. Applications for exemption from school attendance must be submitted in advance. Exemptions from school attendance cannot be granted retrospectively.
   - An exemption from school attendance may be related to:
     - Exceptional domestic circumstances, including but not limited to participation in family holidays during school term, subject to being satisfied that this is in the best educational interests of the child.
     - Other exceptional circumstances such as health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate.
     - Employment in the entertainment industry or participation in elite sporting events for short periods of time, i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice.
   - A Certificate of Exemption may be granted when it has been clearly demonstrated by the parent that an exemption is in the student’s best interests in the short and long term, and that alternatives to exemption have been considered. For example, in some cases, application for distance education may be more appropriate than seeking an exemption from school attendance.
   - Generally, Certificates of Exemption will not be approved in the case of students who have been the subject of a Community Services report or Child Wellbeing Unit report and for whom unresolved issues concerning a risk of harm remain.
   - The principal may grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12-month period for any one student.

2. **Administration of medicine and first aid**
   - If your child becomes ill at school, a staff member will make a judgement as to whether to contact you. We are reluctant to notify parents for what appears to be a minor injury or illness, but we will always err on the side of caution.
   - If a child sustains a serious injury requiring urgent medical attention, the school will call an ambulance and then contact the parents. The school subscribes to the ambulance service; hence, there are no out-of-pocket ambulance expenses for parents.
   - No medication is to be given to a student without the written permission of a parent/guardian.
   - All medication is to be administered at the school office by the medication registrar (Mrs Sartori) or a designated staff member authorised by the principal.
   - Mrs Sartori is the nominated staff medical officer in relation to first aid and advice. In the absence of Mrs Sartori, the principal or nominated teacher will be the designated officer.
   - The principal is to be informed by parents whose children require medication during the school day.
   - Self-administration of medication by a pupil under adult supervision may occur only with the approval of the principal after receipt of a written request from a parent/guardian.
   - All medication kept on the school premises is required to be kept in a cupboard in the sick bay.
   - The school maintains a medication register. The medication register will provide the following information when a student requiring medication leaves the school premises for excursions, sporting activities and other activities:
     - Date / Time / Name of student / Type of medication / Dosage
     - Name of person administering medication (normally the medication registrar)
   - A request form for short-term administration of medication can be found on our website.

3. **Aerosol cans**
   Aerosol cans are banned at St Patrick’s. Items such as deodorant and insect repellent must be of the roll-on variety.
4. **ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day**
Our school acknowledges those who have served our country in war and in peacekeeping forces. To this end, our students march in the Swansea RSL Sub-Branch ANZAC Day march, and we send a delegation of senior students to the Remembrance Day service each year.

5. **Assemblies**
The students gather in the school hall every Friday at 2.30pm for our weekly assembly. The assembly, which is led by the Year 6 students, provides a wonderful opportunity for the staff to affirm individual students on their achievements throughout the week, to reflect on the events of the week, and to remind the students about forthcoming events. Parents and grandparents are welcome to join us at our weekly assemblies.

6. **Behaviour management**
Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) is a school-wide behaviour framework that employs a whole school approach to addressing problem behaviour and to reducing its effects on student outcomes and on the school community. It is based on three school rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful and Be Responsible, and it is linked to a reward system of “Gotchas”. PBL encourages positive behaviour from students, which has been shown to improve their self-concept and motivation to learn.

7. **Bell times**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.00am</td>
<td>Session 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.10am</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.00pm</td>
<td>Session 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.35pm</td>
<td>Afternoon tea</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.55pm</td>
<td>Session 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.55pm</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Please note**
- There is no supervision of students in the mornings before 8.30am.
- If you are running late in the afternoon, please contact the office. Your child will be asked to wait in the school foyer.

8. **Book Club**
The Scholastic Book Club operates within our school. Order forms are sent home at regular intervals. This club provides an opportunity to buy books which are reasonably priced and suitable to the age and interest of the children in each grade. Points earned from book sales are then redeemed as extra resources for the library and as teaching resources.

9. **Buses**
You will need to apply for an Opal Card if you require your child to travel by bus to and from school. This form is available at the school office, or online at https://apps.transport.nsw.gov.au/ssts/termBusPass. Bus routes and timetables can be found on our school website.

10. **Canteen**
Currently, our school canteen is open on Fridays for lunch orders and for counter purchases during the lunch and recess breaks. Canteen price lists appear on our school website. Occasionally the canteen is closed when there are not enough volunteers to staff it. There are two ways to order your child’s lunch:
   i. On a paper bag, write the child’s name, class, order and amount of money enclosed, and place the money inside the bag. At the beginning of the school day, the child places the bag in the class lunch order basket under the COLA.
   ii. Download the Qkr! App onto your Android phone or iPhone. iPad users can download the iPhone app. Follow the steps to register, and either find our school or search for it by name. Register your children and then you are ready to go!

Volunteering to work at the canteen is a great way to get to know other parents. We discourage children from bringing large amounts of money to spend at the canteen.

11. **Collection of money and notes**
Any money sent to the school should be enclosed in a sealed envelope. On the front of the envelope you should write:
- Your child's name.
- Your child's class.
- The amount of money enclosed in the envelope.
• What you are paying for.
At the beginning of each school day, the class teacher sends to the school office any notes and money
brought to school by the students. Alternatively, money can be paid at the school office.

12. **Evacuation and lockdown drills**
At the beginning of Terms 1 and 3 we undertake evacuation and lockdown drills. All people on site, including
visitors and volunteers, must participate in these drills. Evacuation and lockdown procedures are clearly
posted at every exit throughout the school.

13. **Excursions**
From time to time, the students have the opportunity to attend class excursions and sporting activities. When
you enrol your child at the school you are invited to sign a form - “Permission to leave the school property
during school hours”. If you sign this permission form, you will be notified every time that your child is required
to attend an event. We do not take children to an outside venue without first notifying parents in writing. This
permission form only applies to school-related activities that take place between 8.00am and 5.00pm. For
activities outside of these hours, we will seek parental permission.

14. **Homework**
Homework provides an opportunity for families to share in their children’s spiritual, physical,
emotional, social and academic development. It assists in strengthening partnerships
between parents/caregivers and the school and is designed to support each child in
developing the attributes of a lifelong learner. While we recognise the benefits of homework,
we also acknowledge the importance of family time in an increasingly complex and busy
world. Reading is a mandatory homework task. There are other homework tasks that are
considered optional. Our school’s homework policy appears on our school website.

15. **Infectious diseases**
Children who are unwell should not attend school. The following guidelines give the recommended time a
child who is suffering from an infectious disease should be excluded from school.
  • **Acute Conjunctivitis**: Exclude until all discharge has ceased.
  • **Chicken Pox**: Exclude until fully recovered, at least seven days after first spots appear.
  • **Glandular Fever**: Exclude until recovered or until a medical certificate is produced.
  • **Infectious Hepatitis**: Exclude until all symptoms have disappeared or until a doctor issues a
certificate of recovery, but not before seven days after onset of jaundice.
  • **Measles**: Exclude at least seven days from appearance of rash.
  • **Rubella (German Measles)**: Exclude until fully recovered - for at least ten days after rash appears.
  • **Impetigo (scabby sores)**: Consult the family doctor. If sores are being treated and are properly
covered by a clean dressing, children are allowed to attend school.
  • **Pediculosis (head lice)**: Child must be excluded until hair is completely clean of lice and nits.
  • **Whooping Cough**: Exclude for four weeks from onset of illness or until doctor issues a certificate of
recovery.

16. **Jewellery and make-up**
The wearing of jewellery is limited to:
  • 1 pair of earring studs or sleepers - No “dangly” earrings
  • 1 ring
  • 1 necklace inside the uniform
  • 1 watch
  • 1 bracelet

If any jewellery is deemed to present a hazard, your child will be asked to remove the item and it will be
returned at the end of the day. All care but no responsibility will be taken for the loss of jewellery at the school.
Lipstick, lip gloss, blush, mascara, eyeshadow, foundation and all other forms of makeup are not permitted
at St Patrick’s. We do encourage application of standard sunscreen.

17. **Library**
The school has a well-stocked library from which the children are able to borrow books on a weekly basis.
We ask that all children have a library bag, and that they handle books carefully whilst the books are on loan.
We have a simple rule for the protection of our books: **No bag, No books, No borrowing**. Failure to return borrowed books will result in the children losing their borrowing privileges. Each class attends the library once per week for a library lesson and to borrow books.

18. **Lost property**
The school accepts no responsibility for lost articles, although we do make every effort to return items that have been found. Parents are welcome to inquire at the school about lost belongings. Your assistance in labelling all garments and articles would be appreciated. The lost property box is located outside the school foyer, and is brought inside the building after school each day. Unclaimed articles will eventually be sent to either the St Vincent De Paul Society or the uniform shop.

19. **Masses and liturgies**
Parents are the first and primary educators of their children. The role of the school is to support parents in this role. St Patrick’s is an integral part of the parish community. At different times during the year, we join the broader parish community on weekends to celebrate Mass. Families who are not Catholic are very welcome to join us at Mass, and they should feel part of the worshipping community. On special occasions, such as feast days and Mothers’ Day, the students have opportunities to participate in school-based liturgies.

20. **Mission activities**
Throughout the year, we organise fundraising activities to support charitable organisations. Our preferred charities are Caritas, Catholic Mission, SIMS Cambodia and the Mary MacKillop Foundation.

21. **Out-Of-School Hours Care (OOSH)**
Caves Beach Before and After School care operates at the “Green Shed” in the grounds of Swansea High School. The area is completely fenced and it provides a safe area for the care of children. Mornings: 7.00am to 9.30am. Afternoons: 2.30pm to 6.00pm. The OOSH students are brought to school by bus each morning from the OOSH facility. Following our afternoon assembly, we escort the students to the OOSH vehicle which takes them to the Green Shed. For inquiries about OOSH, phone 0418 661 321.

22. **Parents and Friends Association**
The Parents and Friends Association meetings are held in the school library on the fourth Wednesday of each month, beginning at 6.30pm, except when that date falls during the school holidays. These meetings provide an opportunity for an exchange of ideas on policy, curriculum, school activities and fundraising. From time to time, guest speakers address the group. All parents and friends of St Patrick’s are warmly invited to attend our meetings.

23. **Parking**
For safety reasons, parents and carers are asked not to park in the staff car park after school. Street parking is available, although it is limited, particularly at 2.55pm when the children are dismissed from class. At the end of the day’s lessons, the children assemble in lines under the COLA according to their mode of travel home. Parents may either wait on the playground or outside the school property. Children whose parents arrange to meet them outside the school are escorted to the Northcote Avenue exit of the school. Please comply with the parking regulations on the streets in the vicinity of the school. A school safety speed zone (40 km/hour) operates in Northcote Avenue in the mornings and in the afternoons.

24. **Pastoral care**
We provide an environment in which children can grow socially, emotionally, spiritually and intellectually in a way that allows them to develop quality relationships, to make informed decisions and to demonstrate respect for other people. To this end, we are a **You Can Do It** school. **You Can Do It** is a program whose core purpose is the development of young people’s social and emotional capabilities, including the five foundations: confidence, persistence, organisation, getting along and emotional resilience.
25. Photographs of children
Throughout the year, the children have their photographs taken for many reasons. Usually this is in a group situation. These photographs are often included in the school newsletter, slide show presentations, the diocesan website or the diocesan publication ‘Aurora’. There is provision on the school enrolment application for parents and carers to give consent for use of children’s photographs for the above purposes. You may decline permission for us to photograph your child.

26. Public speaking
St Patrick’s sends representatives from Years 1 to 6 to the Diocese of Maitland-Newcastle Regional Public Speaking Competition in September each year.

27. Recycling
St Patrick’s recycles a range of materials, including green waste, paper, cardboard, glass and metal. We provide garbage bins on the playground only on Fridays when the canteen is open. This program saves the school a great deal of time and money, and it is an environmentally sustainable way of managing our waste.

28. Release from face-to-face teaching
Full-time teachers receive two hours per week of release from face-to-face teaching. Part-time teachers receive a pro rata portion of this time. This release time is taken when the teacher-librarian and the music teacher teach the classes, as well as whole days at various times of the year. Teachers use this time to plan their teaching programs and to attend inservice courses.

29. School fees
School fees cover all expenses throughout the year, excluding:
- The Year 5/6 three-day excursion.
- The Year 6 “big day out”.
- The purchase of a ukulele by the Year 5/6 students, and:
- Charity days on which the students are invited to donate a gold coin.
Parents are required to pay school fees, and the accounts are sent home in Terms 1, 2 and 3. School fees may be paid using either cash, cheque, BPay, credit card or direct debit from a savings account. Direct debit forms are available from the school office. Discounts are available to parents who have a health care card or who are in receipt of a pension. Parents who are experiencing difficulties in paying school fees should make an appointment to speak with the principal. No child will be denied a Catholic education because of his/her parent’s genuine inability to pay fees.
The 2019 schedule of fees appears in Appendix 6.

30. Signing in and signing out
It is sometimes necessary for children to be away during school hours (for appointments, etc). If a child is late for school, parents are required to accompany the child to the school office, where they must sign a late arrival slip. If a child must be collected from school before the end of the school day, parents are required to sign an early departure slip at the school office. Parents are requested to notify the class teacher as early as possible if they wish to collect their child before the end of the school day.

31. Staff development days
During 2019, three days will be allocated as staff development days to enable staff members to undertake professional development. As these days are also pupil-free days, timely notice is given to parents so that alternative child-care arrangements may be made.
32. **Student leadership**
- Our student leadership program aims to provide opportunities for students to play a significant and effective role in the decision making processes of our school, and to ensure that student leaders are positive role models for other students. Each year, the student body elects student leaders from among the Year 6 cohort of students.
- The school’s Mini Vinnies group is a group of students who are interested in social justice. The group meets regularly to plan activities that will enable them to help people in need within their school, local or international community. Our Religious Education Coordinator, Leanne Hyland, coordinates the group.

33. **Sunsense**
We teach the children to take responsibility for protecting themselves from the harmful rays of the sun. We have a policy of “No hat, play under the COLA”. We encourage the children to use sunscreen. As the school does not supply sunscreen, the children are asked to supply their own sunscreen. The roll-on sunscreen products are preferred as they are less messy.

34. **Tenison Apartments**
Throughout the year, our students visit the elderly residents of Tenison Apartments, next door to the school. The students and the residents enjoy these opportunities to talk and to entertain one another.

35. **Volunteering**
- Parents and carers are encouraged to assist at St Patrick’s in the following ways:
  - Reading with students
  - Craft activities
  - Library
  - Excursions
  - Sporting events
  - Canteen
  - Fundraising
  - Parents and Friends Association
- People who wish to volunteer at St Patrick’s must firstly:
  - Obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC) from Service NSW. (There is no fee for a Volunteers’ WWCC).
  - Complete a “Working With Children Check Clearance Number Verification and Declaration Form” which is available on our website and from the school office.
  - Submit this form and the WWCC, with 100 points of identification, to the school office.
- There are some exemptions from these requirements, including a volunteer under 18 years of age and one-off visitors whose work is carried out in the presence of one or more other adults.
- When a volunteers reports to the school for duty, they must:
  - Collect a volunteers’ badge from the school foyer and to wear it whilst on the school property.
  - Sign the volunteers’ register upon entering and leaving the school. The volunteers’ register, which is located in the school foyer, is maintained for the purpose of compliance with occupational health and safety legislation and child protection legislation.

36. **Website and app**
You will find our school website at http://www.swansea.catholic.edu.au/. On our homepage there is a link to the instructions for installing the school app. The school website and app are efficient means of communication from school to home. Each week the school newsletter is uploaded to the website and sent out via the app. In addition, various school documents of interest to parents appear on the website.
ESPECIALLY FOR OUR NEW KINDERS

1. **Getting Ready for School**

It is a very big 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 help this transition:

- Buy clothing that is easy to fasten.
- Ensure that all articles that are brought to school (shoes, caps, coats, jumpers, bags, book, lunchboxes, etc.) are marked clearly in a prominent place with the child's Christian name and surname.
- Teach your child:
  - To tie shoelaces, do up buttons, put on and take off outer clothing. This is very important when the students engage in sport lessons.
  - To know their full name and address.
  - To recognise their name among other names.
  - To put away toys, books, etc. after use.
  - To wash their hands and flush the toilet unassisted.
  - To know the safest way to and from school.
- Some weeks in advance, rehearse with your child (in a spirit of play) the different situations to be met within school life:
  - Open and close the school bag.
  - Unpack and eat the school lunch.
  - Dress for school and make the journey to and from school.
  - Be away from home and parents for short periods.
  - Use pencils, crayons, scissors, etc.
  - Enjoy books by providing books which are bright, attractive and have only a little reading content. Read stories daily.
  - Listen to stories, look at pictures and talk about them.
  - Encourage your child to talk. Answer questions and encourage interest in the daily environment and activities. The best preparation for reading and writing is good language development. If your child writes his/her name, please do not use capital letters, e.g. *Natalie* not NATALIE. Using capital letters to write is a habit that is very hard to break.
  - Greet friends by name.
  - Encourage correct letter formation using the Foundation Handwriting Sheet. (See Appendix 1).

2. **Settling into school**

The change from being at home or at pre-school to five full days per week at school can lead to some anxiety for small children. Some children may find it difficult to cope, especially during Term One. You can help your child to settle into school by following some of the following suggestions:

- Many little children find lunch time with a large group of children quite disconcerting. This can lead to poor eating habits at the beginning of the year. It is best to give little children smaller quantities of known favourites and to “top them up” when they arrive home. We do not have waste bins on the playground (except for Fridays), so the children bring home in their lunch boxes what they don't eat. This allows you to adjust lunches accordingly. Lunches need to be nutritious and healthy. Water bottles can be kept on desks in the classroom.
- Your child should go to bed early. A tired child cannot benefit from a full day at school.
- Kindergarten children often get very tired and feel the strain of being part of a large group. You will notice this particularly towards the end of the week for the first few months.
- If your child feels unhappy at school for any reason, please let us know. We cannot help with a problem unless we know it exists.
- Interviews and discussions between parents and teachers should take place before or after school, not during class time. Interruptions during class time can cause considerable disruption.
- Please ensure that your child is punctual in arriving at school.
- Let your child talk to you about his/her experiences. It is important that you share in his/her new life.
- Do not be surprised when you find that the little ones in Kindergarten are not taught all the formal prayers which older children and adults use. A five-year-old child should be allowed to speak to God in a five-year-old way; parents can do much to foster a love of informal prayer in little children.
- Develop the same routine for drop-offs in the morning. Always tell your child when you are leaving,
reassure them if they are anxious, and let them know that you will return. Alert the teacher if it becomes apparent that your child is becoming upset. If your child is upset when you deliver him/her to school, leave quickly. The school will ring you to confirm that your child has settled. If you give into your child the first time, it will quickly develop into a habitual pattern which will make the start of the day traumatic for all concerned.
APPENDIX 1: HANDWRITING – NSW FOUNDATION SCRIPT

As many of the children are learning to write their names and sometimes other words as well, here is a copy of Foundation style writing, so that the children can learn to write the correct way from the beginning.

It is a good idea to encourage correct grip when learning to write, and to teach the children to write in lower case letter, not capital letters. People’s names begin with a capital letter, but the rest of the word is written in lower case.

Foundation style slopes a little. This allows for a smooth transition to joining their letters in a few years.

Note:
Capital J does not have a “top”.
Capital I does not have a “hat” and “base”.
Lower case k has an oval top.

Aa  Bb  Cc  Dd  Ee  Ff  
Gg  Hh  Ii  Jj  Kk  Ll  
Mm  Nn  Oo  Pp  Qq  Rr  
Ss  Tt  Uu  Vv  Ww  Xx  
    Yy  Zz

1  2  3  4  5
6  7  8  9  0
APPENDIX 2: COMMENCEMENT OF THE CRIMES AMENDMENT (SCHOOLS PROTECTION ACT) 2002

The Commencement of the Crimes Amendment (Schools Protection Act) 2002 was brought into force on the 10th February 2003. This amendment arose from a proposal of the 16th August 2002 ‘Community and Parents and Police Forum’ which aimed to introduce specific measures in the Crimes Act to better protect school communities from Criminal Intruders.

Parliament passed the Law in December 2002 to reinforce the message to the community that schools are valued as special places and will be treated as such at Law. Offences under the new Act are:

1. Assaulting, stalking, harassing or intimidating any school student or member of staff while the student or member of staff is attending school – maximum penalty is 5 years imprisonment.
2. Assaulting a school student or member of staff while the student or member of staff is attending school in circumstances where the assault causes actual bodily harm. “Actual bodily harm” is an injury that is more than merely transient and trifling, including a psychiatric injury but not mere fear or panic – maximum penalty is 7 years imprisonment.
3. Maliciously wounding of a school student or member of staff while the student or member of staff is attending school. “Malicious Wounding” means breaking or cutting the skin of a person with malice, indifference to the outcome, recklessly, wantonly or with intent to injure the person – maximum penalty is 12 years imprisonment.
4. Maliciously inflicting grievous bodily harm to a school student or member of staff while the student or member of staff is attending school. “Maliciously inflict grievous bodily harm” means an injury of a serious kind but not necessarily permanent, which is also done maliciously – maximum penalty is 12 years imprisonment.
5. Entering onto school premises with the intention to commit one of the above offences – maximum penalty is 5 years.

Some principals have raised concerns about the relationship of this legislation to the normal discipline processes in the school. It is, in the view of the State Departments Legal Services Directorate, that if instances such as minor physical altercations, harassment or intimidation between students are dealt with in accordance with existing school discipline and welfare policies, they need not be reported to the police.

This is very important to all of us as members of a school community and the implications are far reaching. In the past some parents have felt it was within their right to approach students and staff on the playground to voice their opinions forcefully on altercations happening within the school context, the school has never condoned this. It is the school’s policy to discuss concerns in the context of an interview. In light of this legislation it becomes imperative to inform parents that entering the school grounds with the purpose of approaching students personally with grievances, will be seen as extremely serious and will result in strong action from the school, to the point of partial exclusion from school grounds for a specified period for the offending person initially and possibly the notification of this action to police if deemed necessary. All children have the right to be safe at school.
APPENDIX 3: REPORTING TO THE POLICE

In determining whether an incident involving students is required to be reported to the police, particularly where it involves harassment or intimidation, principals will need to examine the facts relevant to each individual case. Factors to be taken into account include, but are not limited to:

- The effect of the incident on the victim.
- The extent of any physical injuries sustained.
- The nature of any threats that may have been made.
- Whether any weapons or other implements have been used.
- Whether the incident involved an individual student or a group of students.
- The age of the students involved and any age differential between the victim and the alleged perpetrator.
- Whether the incident was isolated or part of an ongoing dispute between the students involved.
- The likelihood of the dispute being resolved through school welfare and discipline procedures.
- Whether school welfare and discipline procedures have been used in the past but have failed to resolve the issue.
- Whether the events involve children under the age of 10 as alleged offenders. Children under 10 are not considered by the law to be capable of committing a criminal offence. (Principals will, however, need to consider whether action in accordance with child protection legislation is required, e.g. is the child at risk of harm and/or in need of care).
- Whether the provisions of the Child Protection-Physical Mistreatment Act 2001 may apply.
- The views of the parents or caregivers of the victim. (Parents and students have the right to report a matter directly to the Police).

If principals are in any doubt as to whether or not to report a matter to the police, they should contact their local police to discuss the issue.

APPENDIX 4: INCLOSED LANDS PROTECTION ACT (1901)

This Act created the offence of criminal trespass. Police can and should enforce this act. Set out below is a summary of the offence:

It is an offence, without lawful excuse, to:

- Enter enclosed lands without the consent of the owner, occupier or person apparently in charge, or:
- Remain on enclosed lands after being requested to leave by the owner, occupier or person apparently in charge. (Enclosed Lands Act 1901, ILPA s.4 – maximum 5 penalty points).

Some premises such as schools are specially prescribed and any entry to this carries a double penalty of 10 penalty units.

Furthermore, this Act has recently been amended and strengthened to allow police officers the option of issuing an “on the spot fine” to any person who breaches this Act:

- Entering school premises without lawful excuse or remaining on school premises after being asked to leave: $550.
- Acting in an offensive manner on school premises while remaining on those premises after being asked to leave: $250.