St Matthew's Primary School

Information Book 2012 - 2013

Stutchbury Street
Page ACT 2614

Telephone (02) 6254 2653
Fax (02) 6254 9009
Website www.stmattsps.act.edu.au
Email office@stmatts.cg.catholic.edu.au
... in Truth and Love ...
Principal’s Welcome

Thank you for taking the time to consider St Matthew’s Primary School as part of your child’s journey in both faith and education. The St Matthew’s community welcomes enrolments from families who are genuinely interested in a Christian education based on gospel values, taught from the perspective of the Catholic Faith Tradition.

At St Matthew’s we strive to build a vibrant and welcoming community, where our relationship with Jesus is central, learning is engaging, individual achievements are celebrated and where the children are at the heart of what is most important. Our school lives out the Gospel values of love and respect for all.

We aim to work together with our families to support and encourage the faith development of our students and are proud of the warm and inviting atmosphere that exists at our school.

It is our aim to create a sense of belonging, which will, in turn, nurture your child’s growth and help create a healthy self-esteem, factors so necessary for effective learning. Your involvement in your child’s education, whenever possible, is most desirable.

This Parent Information Booklet is a brief overview of some features and organisational details of our school community. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to make contact with the school to meet with me and to view our facilities.

May Jesus journey with you in truth and love.

Brenda Foley
Principal

brenda.foley@cg.catholic.edu.au
A brief history of St Matthew’s

St Matthew’s, Page, a co-educational school catering for students from Kindergarten to Year Six, was opened in January 1972 with an initial enrolment of 360 children and twelve staff members. In response to a request from the then Archbishop of Canberra Goulburn, Archbishop Cahill, the Sisters of St Joseph took charge of the new school. Sister Leo Ryan became the Foundation Principal.

The last Principal appointed by the Sisters of St Joseph was Sister Anne Moylan (known then as Sister Peter Julian), who left St Matthew’s at the end of 1987. In 1988 the first lay Principal was appointed, and by 1989 the school was entirely staffed by lay teachers. The community is greatly indebted to the Sisters of St Joseph, who worked so tirelessly to establish and nurture the growth of Catholic Education at St Matthew’s. A plaque commemorating their role in the establishment of the school has been placed in the foyer.

By 1977 St Matthew’s enrolment reached its peak of 919 students. Currently, in spacious, comfortable and well equipped surroundings, the enrolment is now approximately 350 students, drawn mostly from the surrounding suburbs of Hawker, Weetangera, Higgins, Page and Scullin. We also have students who come from as far away as Hall, Murrumbateman, Yass and Wamboin.

At St Matthew’s we consider we are –

Big enough to dare
Small enough to care

St Matthew’s School Prayer

Written by student Jazcinta Pasher in 2008

St Matthew,
You gave us an example of how to follow God.
You showed us how to be a strong and loving leader.
Teach us to be kind and to help others in our school community.
Help us to do our best and to care for others in truth and love.
Amen
Our Mission

As we build the Kingdom of God in truth and love at St Matthew’s, our mission is to be a Christ-centred community in which our uniqueness is cherished and nurtured.

Our Beliefs

At the foundation of our mission lie the key beliefs that reflect the vision of our community.

• We believe that we must be Christ for others and see Christ in others.

• We believe that we are a celebrating community that lives out the Gospel values with joy and hope.

• As part of the global community we believe in welcoming all adults and children and valuing their diversity.

Exit Outcomes

During their time at St Matthew’s students are challenged to develop as whole people and become lifelong learners.

• Students are encouraged to develop their SPIRITUALITY by being more Christ like.

• Students develop STRENGTH OF CHARACTER.

• Students are challenged to develop a wide range of THINKING and COMMUNICATION skills.

• Students are encouraged to make wise decisions to ensure that there is BALANCE in their lives and to develop a sense of CITIZENSHIP.

This is what education is all about, this is the meaning of life … to know Jesus as a friend, as someone who cares about you and the person next to you, and all the people here and everywhere.

† Pope John Paul II
As well as a nurturing, dynamic and engaging environment where each child is individually acknowledged and encouraged to grow spiritually, academically, socially and emotionally, we also offer ...

- An innovative curriculum, which draws on current educational theory and practice while also being tailored to meet individual student needs.

- Two computer laboratories, where the students integrate Information Communication Technology into all Subject Areas.

- Interactive whiteboards in all classrooms, including the library, music room and Japanese room.

- A strong Year Six Leadership Program, in which all the students learn about leadership and take on extra responsibilities in leading the school.

- A comprehensive and effective Student Welfare and Management Policy.

- An Assessment Policy where assessment is easily understood by students and parents.

- The full implementation of Treasures New and Old, our Archdiocesan Religious Education Curriculum.

- The ‘Seasons for Growth’ program offering support to children who have suffered loss through death or parental separation.

- Explicitly taught values, learnt and practiced in context.

- A comprehensive music program.

- A gymnastics/dance program conducted by specialist instructors in alternative years.

- Participation in the Rostrum Public Speaking competition.

- School choir and recorder band.

- Two school concerts each year, one for junior students and one for senior students.

- Year 5 and 6 participation in the Wakakirri National Story Dance Festival in alternate years.

- An all-encompassing sporting program which involves participation in swimming, athletics and cross-country carnivals for Years 2 to 6 students.

- A comprehensive swimming program at the Australian Institute of Sport for all children in Kindergarten to Year 6.
Contact Information

School Contacts
St Matthew’s Primary School
Address  Stutchbury Street
Postal PO Box 4172
Postal Hawker ACT 2614
Website www.stmattsps.act.edu.au
Email info@stmattsps.act.edu.au
Phone (02) 6254 2653
Fax (02) 6254 9009

School Leadership Team 2011
Principal  Ms Brenda Foley
Assistant Principal  Ms Cathy Talbot
RE Coordinator  Mrs Sylvia Campbell
Coordinator  Mr Paul Cecere

Administrative staff  Mrs Helen Wilks
Mrs Sally Wyers

Parish of St Matthew’s
Parish Priest  Fr Michael Mullen
Address  Chewings Street
Page ACT 2614
Phone  (02) 6254 1827
Parish Secretary  Mrs Mary Morris

Term Dates 2013
Term 1  Monday 5 February to Friday 12 April
Canberra Day Holiday - Monday 11 March
Good Friday - Friday 29 March
Easter Monday - Monday 1 April

Term 2  Monday 29 April to Friday 5 July
Queen’s Birthday Holiday - Monday 10 June

Term 3  Monday 22 July to Friday 27 September

Term 4  Monday 14 October to Friday 20 December
General Information

School Hours

8.30 am  Playground supervision begins
8.50 am  Classes begin with Morning Assembly
11.00 am – 11.30 am  Morning Tea
11.30 am – 1.00 pm  Classes
1.00 pm – 1.50 pm  Lunch
1.50 pm – 3.00 pm  Classes
3.00 pm  End of School Day

The school grounds are open to St Matthew’s students from 8.30 am and until 3.20 pm each day, during which time the school provides constant supervision. Children should not be on the school grounds before teacher supervision commences at 8.30 am, and must be collected by 3.20 pm at the latest in the afternoon.

Children are expected to be at school in time for our Morning Assembly at 8.50 am. Parents are asked to avoid late arrivals; it is unsettling for the child, the class and teacher. If your child does arrive late, s/he must be accompanied into school and signed in at the Front Office by the parent/carer.

Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours. Exceptions will be made if the child is being collected at the Front Office by parents or another responsible adult who is authorised by the parents to collect the child/ren. The ‘Sign Out Book’ at the front office must be signed whenever children leave the school during school hours.

Attendance at School

In accordance with the requirements of the Education Act, parents are encouraged to train their children in the habit of regular attendance at school. Generally, each day’s work is built upon the previous day’s work and any loss of time may upset the teaching and learning programs for the teacher and student.

However, a child who is ill does not participate well and should be kept at home to receive the care needed for recovery. The school should be notified by telephone of a child’s absence on the day the absence occurs. Upon returning to class, a brief written note of explanation from the parent/guardian must be presented to the class teacher. This is a legal requirement.

Contact Phone Numbers

Parents are asked to inform the school office immediately if contact details change, including address, phone numbers and emergency contacts. This is imperative to allow prompt contact with parents/carers in the event of an emergency. A letter or email to the front office detailing the changes will suffice.

Parents are also asked to supply a reliable local emergency contact name and phone number for those times when neither parent can be reached.
Delivery of students to school - morning

Supervision begins at 8.30 am. Children must not be on the premises before then unless in Before School Care or private music tuition.

Parents/carers are encouraged to use the drop-off zone in front of the hall to deliver children in the mornings.
- Drivers access the car park turning in from Stutchbury Street via the entrance closest to the Junior Playground and leave via the exit at the bottom of the netball courts ramp.
- Parents/carers drive into the drop-off zone, children say a quick goodbye and step onto the path which leads to the playground using the doors on the LEFT HAND SIDE OF THE CAR, then the car moves on. Children should not get out on the right hand side of vehicles as they are in danger of being struck by other cars.
- Drivers using the drop-off facility are to stay in their cars as getting out to open doors or car boot will cause traffic delays.
- Drivers must move on promptly without overtaking cars in front.
- Three cars can use the drop-off zone at one time. Do not stop in the middle or at the back of the zone if there are no cars in the front space/s. Move to the front of the zone.
- Only cars using the drop-off zone are permitted to drive through the staff car park. Please do not park in the staff car park at any time.
- Please do not use the driveway which leads into the Junior Playground at any time.
- If parents wish to get out of the car to help the child exit the vehicle (or would like to say a prolonged goodbye!), they must use the netball court car park or parent car park.

If parents/carers prefer to use the netball court car park or parent car park so they can walk their child/ren to the supervision area, they are asked to accompany the child/ren through the car park, down the front steps and around the side of the hall to the Junior Playground. There is no general access through the school building before 8.50 am.

Collection of students from school - afternoon

School concludes at 3.00 pm each day. Supervision is provided until 3.20 pm.

- At the conclusion of school each day, all children in the school are taken by their class teachers to the Junior Playground.
- Parents who are collecting their child/ren directly after school wait in this area.
- After the bell, the teacher on duty dismisses the After School Care children, followed by walkers, riders and those children catching buses.
- Children who can see their parent/carer are then be permitted to stand up and walk to the adult taking them home. Parents/carers then directly supervise their child/ren. We ask that parents/carers do not allow their children to play games at this time.
- Children will remain on the green soft fall area until an adult has come to collect them.
- Children are not be permitted to walk unaccompanied to cars, even those in line of sight from the Junior Playground.
- The playground equipment remains out of bounds after school.
- In the afternoons, children must be collected by 3.20 pm at the latest unless at After School Care. Children left at school after this time are taken to the Principal's office from where the parent/carer may collect the children on arrival.
Student Behaviour Protocol

All that we do and say at St Matthew’s is grounded in the values we teach explicitly to our students. Our student behaviour protocol is based on a clear premise that we act in a positive manner with the aim of restoration of relationships that may be damaged through conflict or poor behaviour choices. This is done through our Value Assemblies, in class activities and reinforced by our Year 6 leaders in the peer support groups. Our agreed core values are:

- Well-being
- Respect
- Learning
- Responsibility
- Belonging
- Doing Your Best

A school-wide set of rules developed by the staff, which sets out our expectations in a simple form, is the basis of our words and actions. These three rules also form the basis of class rules that are negotiated in each class at the beginning of the year and reinforced with reminders throughout the school terms.

These rules help us achieve our aims and support our agreed values:

- We show courtesy and respect for others.
- We allow students to learn and teachers to teach.
- We care for the environment in which we work and live.

Ways in which we encourage our students to achieve the above outcomes include the Anti Bullying and Unacceptable Language Policies, and the ‘Hands Off, Feet Off’ rule. A copy of our Student Behaviour Protocol is available on the school website.

The Sacramental Program

The Sacramental programs at St Matthew’s are parish-based with the school working closely with the parish team, the parish school of religion and families to help implement the programs. All children are taught the content of Penance (Confession) in Year Two, Eucharist in Year Three and Confirmation in Year Six. The final acceptance of the invitation to receive the sacrament is entirely the responsibility of the families involved. Parents may wish to wait if they feel their child is not ready or that the family is not able to commit fully to the program at the time.

Attendance at information, preparation and prayer sessions by families wishing to participate in the Sacramental program is expected.

Kindergarten Information

Towards the end of Term Four an Information Night for parents and an Orientation session for students are conducted for those who have enrolled in Kindergarten the following year.

When forming classes, the school works in liaison with the local preschools and parents so that where possible the children will be placed with friends and other children whom they know. Classes are not based on ability groups, but rather a balance of gender and age.
**Enrolment Policy**

Kindergarten children must have turned five years of age by 30 April the year they start school. Proof of age will be required. If there are fewer places than the demand in any year the following priorities will apply:

- Baptised Catholic children who are members of the St Matthew’s Parish Community
- Siblings of children already attending the school
- Baptised Catholic children from other parishes who cannot obtain places in their local parish school
- Baptised Catholic children from Catholic primary schools in parishes which are outside the priority enrolment area
- Baptised Catholic children from non-Catholic schools
- Children of other Christian families
- Children of other faith communities/religious traditions.

**Communication between school and home**

Open and ongoing communication between parents, staff and children is extremely important in enhancing all aspects of children’s learning and development. Parents are always welcome to visit the school and speak with the teachers and principal; however, for practical reasons it is preferable that an appointment is made beforehand. We would appreciate your cooperation in not seeking to speak with class teachers during class time or morning assembly time.

There are opportunities for you to meet with your child’s teacher and discuss your child’s progress throughout the school year. Details of these occasions are provided at the Parent Information Nights which are held at the beginning of the year. *(See our section overleaf on Reporting and Assessment)*

The weekly newsletter, ‘Matty’s Matters’, is delivered each Thursday via email and is published on the school website. The newsletter contains items of interest, information and reminders of meetings and other school events.

A term calendar is issued at the beginning of each term. Both the newsletter and the term calendar are accessible through the school website.

**Reporting and Assessment**

Assessment in primary school is focused across the full school year. Every successful teacher sees the importance of continuously gathering information and making judgements about his or her students’ strengths, weaknesses, abilities, achievements and needs. Assessment is used in evaluating a child’s individual progress, reporting to parents and in planning the next set of learning experiences.

Teachers use a range of assessment procedures, including:

- Recording observations of children’s learning
- Occasional administration of progress tests designed to suit a particular group of children
- Maintaining checklists
- Ongoing anecdotal assessment
- Rich assessment tasks
- Formal Government testing *(in Years 3 and 5)*
- Specific screening
**Reporting and Assessment Timeline**

Communication between teachers and parents is vital to the success of the children. The following opportunities are available for Reporting and Communication:

**Term One**  
Class Information Letters  
Meet and Greet Interviews  
Learning Journeys (Week 7)

**Term Two**  
Class Information Letters  
Formal Student Achievement Reports  
Parent/Teacher Interviews

**Term Three**  
Class Information Letters  
Learning Journeys  
Learning Journeys (Week 7)

**Term Four**  
Class Information Letters  
Formal Student Achievement Reports  
Parent/Teacher Interviews as requested by parents

**Excursions and Performances**

During the year children will be given opportunities to participate in a variety of educational activities either at school or at other venues. The cost of these activities is deducted from the Co-curricula Levy which is included in the School Fees.

Permission notes are required by the school before children are permitted to travel by public or private transport. Educational excursions are regarded as an integral part of the learning process; therefore, all children are expected to participate. Children in Years 5 and 6 participate in a 3-day camp experience each year. The cost of this camp is added to the School Fees.

**School Community Council**

In 2012, St Matthew’s moved to the Community Council model of school governance. The Community Council Executive is a group made up of elected parent representatives including Chair, Deputy Chair, Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Secretary, Parish Priest, Principal and Staff Representatives. This Executive works on strategic and management planning, school budget, sets school fees and collaborate with the Community Council Committees. There are six Committees which are run by parents which sit side-by-side with the Executive. These Committees are:

- **School Services** - Clothing Pool, Canteen, Book Club, Student Banking
- **Community Services** - Class representatives, Mother’s Day event, Father’s Day event, Carols by Candlelight, Social events
- **Fundraising** - Trivia night, School discos, Bunnings BBQs, Election Day BBQs
- **Fete** – held each year in early November
- **School Environment** - Grounds maintenance, Playground maintenance, Working bees
- **Special Events** – 40th Anniversary in 2012 etc

Parents are warmly invited to become involved in the Community Council at the beginning of each year. We pride ourselves on being a school where everyone does a little bit!
Family Involvement

To help us provide the best possible education for your child, your involvement as parents/carers is welcomed and encouraged. Help comes in many forms:

At home:

- Talking with your child about school (highlighting the positive aspects).
- Ensuring that your child is reading and/or being read to regularly.
- Ensuring that homework is completed and discussed.
- Ensuring you child is equipped each morning with the tools s/he needs to complete a successful day of learning at school – fruit break, recess and lunch, school hat, home reader/homework, other necessary equipment etc.

At school:

- Joining in with class and school Masses and attending school assemblies.
- Participating in Sacramental Programs.
- Assisting teachers with literacy and maths groups, art/craft, computer work, or any area of the curriculum you enjoy and in which you feel confident.
- Attending grounds maintenance working bees.
- Attending Community Council Open Meetings.
- Assisting with a Community Council working party or committee.

Homework

We believe that children can begin to develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and time management skills by doing homework. Homework creates an important and appropriate link between home and school, directly involving parents in their child’s education. Homework is an opportunity to develop existing skills through practice. We believe that homework is also:

- A positive reinforcement of learning done at school.
- An opportunity for open-ended research for children who want to be extended.
- An opportunity for parent/child discussion about what the child is learning.
- A means of providing the teacher with feedback as to how concepts and skills have been grasped.

Homework requirements take into account the diversity of expectations placed upon children outside school hours by family and social commitments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Suggested Core Homework Activities (4 nights a week)</th>
<th>Time Limit (includes core and optional activity time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>Reading, alphabet, sight words</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1</td>
<td>Reading, sight words, alphabet, numeration skills</td>
<td>15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2</td>
<td>Reading, sight words, alphabet, numeration skills</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>Reading, spelling, numeration skills</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4</td>
<td>Reading, spelling, numeration skills</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>Reading, spelling, numeration skills</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6</td>
<td>Reading, spelling, numeration skills</td>
<td>40 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stationery Requirements

The school supplies most stationery needs for the children. To cover the cost of these, a Resource Fee is incorporated into the school fees. We do ask parents to provide the following items and replenish when necessary:

• **Kindergarten**: painting smock, library bag and box of tissues.
• **Year 1**: painting smock, library bag, chair bag and box of tissues.
• **Years 2 - 6**: painting smock, library bag, coloured pencils and textas, recorder and a box of tissues.

**Please note:**

• All exercise books, textbooks and paints are supplied by the school.
• All exercise books should be covered and clearly marked with the child’s name and class.
• Each child is asked to supply one box of tissues (200) at the beginning of the year. These will be collected by the teacher and used by all children in the class throughout the year.
• Recorders are available from the front office.

School Uniform

The school uniform is part of our community identity as St Matthew’s School. Children are to wear correct uniform at all times and we ask the cooperation of parents in this matter. If children are out of uniform for any reason, please provide a written note of explanation to the class teacher.

In accordance with the ACT Government SunSmart Policy students at St Matthew’s must comply with the No-School-Hat-No-Play rule. Shaded areas have been set aside for children to sit in they do not have a hat. It is important that parents help their children apply sunscreen before coming to school, and provide them with the skills needed to reapply sunscreen as necessary.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St Matthew’s Uniform Requirements</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Summer</strong></td>
<td>Sky blue polo shirt with school crest</td>
<td>Sky blue polo shirt with school crest with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navy blue shorts</td>
<td>Blue tailored dress shorts <strong>or</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black polishable school shoes (not black sandshoes or skate shoes)</td>
<td>ACT Catholic primary school summer dress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navy ankle length socks</td>
<td>White ankle length socks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maroon school jumper with logo</td>
<td>Black polishable school shoes (not black sandshoes or skate shoes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maroon school hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Maroon school jumper with logo <strong>or</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winter</strong></td>
<td>Navy trousers</td>
<td>Sky blue ‘Peter Pan’ collar blouse or skivvy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Blue shirt with St Matthew’s school tie <strong>or</strong></td>
<td>Navy slacks <strong>or</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sky blue Skivvy</td>
<td>ACT Catholic primary school winter pinafore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Black polishable school shoes</td>
<td>Navy blue tights <strong>or</strong> navy ankle length socks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Navy ankle length socks</td>
<td>Black polishable school shoes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maroon school hat</td>
<td>Maroon school hat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sport</strong></td>
<td>Maroon shorts (not Umbro or similar) or pleated netball style skirt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with sports pants underneath</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sky blue sports shirt with school crest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White socks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White or light coloured sports shoes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maroon school jumper with logo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Plain maroon tracksuit – no logo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
School Uniform – continued

Please note the following general points:

• A navy parka or coat is permitted in the cooler months.
• School hats must be worn throughout the year, except in June and July when they are optional.
• An optional navy beanie may be worn in June and July. Scarves and gloves must be navy blue or maroon.
• Children are to wear mostly white sneakers with sports uniform.
• Boots and high cut sneakers are unacceptable at all times.
• Socks worn should cover the ankles.
• No jewellery is permitted other than a watch or one stud type earring in either/both ears. Only earlobes are permitted to be pierced.
• Nail polish is not to be worn.
• Hair must be neat and tidy, and is to be natural hair colours and styles only. Long hair (past shoulder length) must be secured in ponytails or plaits. Children are not to have designs shaved into the hair. Extreme hairstyles are to be avoided.
• Hair ribbons are to be in the school colours of navy or maroon.

Year Six Student Leadership Program

At St Matthew’s, we believe that all students have leadership potential. Leadership skills can be taught and learned. It is the school’s social responsibility to develop an understanding of leadership and leadership skills in all students, with particular focus on the Leadership Class.

Therefore, we consider all members of the Year Six class to be Student Leaders. Student Leadership is about learning to be a good leader in a variety of situations, and making wise choices when given leadership responsibilities.

They are given many opportunities to learn about and display leadership qualities, and can earn the right to wear the School Leader shirt. Leadership at the school level is learned and then earned, so every facet of the Leadership program is dependent on the student earning the Leadership roles and privileges.

All members of the Leadership group nominate themselves for consideration as Student Leaders in one of four positions:

- Hospitality Host
- Media Mogul
- Eager Environmentalist
- Activity Activist

The Student Leaders work on leadership skills throughout the year, and are encouraged to display good leading behaviours at all times.

The Year Six students are also given the shared responsibility of leading the other students. In addition to leading by personal example, these students facilitate ‘Values In Practice’ (VIP) groups; these are small groups of ten to fifteen children from across the grade levels. In this way positive relationships are built amongst students and between teachers and students. These groups meet to complete a variety of activities designed to develop values and skills, which enable the leaders to use their talents to benefit others.
School Fees

It is important that you understand why parents are asked to pay fees in a Catholic school. Traditionally Australian Catholic schools have been built and operated with money provided by the parents whose children are enrolled in the schools. Although both the Federal and the ACT. governments now contribute substantially to the economic viability of our schools, we still rely heavily on school fees collected from parents to ensure a level of staffing and resources comparable with the government schools. We also rely on funds raised through the Community Council for necessary resources.

The Community Council and Catholic Education Commission are responsible for setting the school fees each year. Every attempt is made by these parties to minimise the fees. Outlined below is an explanation of the fees and on whose behalf the fee is collected. School fees for the 2012 year are set out below. Please note these fees are expected to change for 2013.

St Matthew’s 2012 Fees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PER TERM</th>
<th>One Student</th>
<th>Two Students</th>
<th>Three Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Catholic Education Office Tuition Fee</td>
<td>$290.00</td>
<td>$377.00</td>
<td>$435.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Fee</td>
<td>$55.00</td>
<td>$110.00</td>
<td>$165.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazine Levy</td>
<td>$6.60</td>
<td>$6.60</td>
<td>$6.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
<td>$120.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Improvement Levy</td>
<td>$33.00</td>
<td>$33.00</td>
<td>$33.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Fund</td>
<td>$132.00</td>
<td>$132.00</td>
<td>$132.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-curricular Activities</td>
<td>$45.00</td>
<td>$90.00</td>
<td>$135.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT Levy</td>
<td>$15.00</td>
<td>$30.00</td>
<td>$45.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$696.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>$898.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1071.60</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* A tuition discount applies for families with older siblings in systemic Catholic high schools.
  Please enquire at the Front Office.

Tuition Fee
Tuition fees are collected on behalf of the Catholic Education Commission and this money is used to help pay teachers’ wages and other running costs of the Catholic Education Office. This fee is paid on an individual student basis, and in the primary school there are significant discounts for siblings from the same family.

Catholic Schools Building Fund Contribution
These contributions are paid into a central fund administered by the trustees of the Archdiocese and the amount is tax deductible. These funds are used to maintain and repair capital works in Catholic schools. Since 2001 St Matthew’s has received over $250 000 from this fund. This money has been used to refurbish the canteen, computer lab and classrooms. It has also been used to update the main switchboard in the school and to provide insulation to the classrooms. The amount shown above does not include the costs involved with regular maintenance such as blocked toilets, replacement of downpipes and other services carried out by CEO staff and their contractors.

Utilities Levy
This fee is set by the School Board and is a family fee. It is used to pay for essential services such as electricity, gas, telephone, photocopying and cleaning.
**School Improvement Levy**
This fee is set by the School Board and is charged at $33 per family per term. This levy has been charged to help service loans taken out for recent school refurbishments.

**School Magazine Levy**
This fee is charged to pay for the school magazine which each family receives at the end of the year. The magazine is an informative and celebratory record of the school’s events for the year.

**Resource Levy**
This fee is set by the School Board and is charged on a per student basis. Families who have four children attending St Matthew’s are not charged for the fourth child. This money, which is retained by the school, is used to pay for textbooks, exercise books, paper, pencils, paint and other classroom consumables. It is also used to pay for resources for each of the Subject Areas.

**Co-Curricular Levy**
This levy is set by the School Board to cover costs for the swimming, cross-country and athletics carnivals, Term Four swimming program, alternate year dance/gym programs and excursions.

**ICT Levy**
This levy is set by the School Board ensures we have sufficient funds to maintain current ICT resources, and also to purchase new resources including pods of mobile laptop facilities for class use and other Learning Technologies to enhance teaching and learning experiences at school.

**School Fee Payment**
The preferred method of payment of school fees is BPay or Direct Debit. School fees can also be paid by cash, cheque or EFTPOS at the front office. Credit card payments can be made at the front office or by phone; alternatively you may set up an automatic regular payment from a credit card account. The school financial year runs from 1 January to 31 December. Forms and advice are available from the front office to help parents/carers set up these arrangements.
Curriculum

St Matthew’s offers quality teaching and learning in Religious Education, English, Mathematics, Science, Technology, Health and Physical Education, History, Japanese and The Arts. Through teaching these Subject Areas, we endeavour to develop the intellectual, academic, physical, emotional, social and spiritual growth of our students. We aim to provide opportunities for success for each child, and to build on all positive aspects of learning.

We are currently in a state of transition from the ACT Curriculum framework ‘Every Chance to Learn’ to the new national Australian Curriculum. We have adopted the new national curriculum in English, Maths, Science and History.

Religious Education

Religious Education focuses on religious knowledge, liturgy and prayer. It is the parents’ role to play an active part in the faith development of their children, and in so doing, complement and support the school in this vital aspect of the child’s life. We base our studies on the Archdiocesan Religious Education curriculum, ‘Treasures New and Old.’

English

There are four elements to English: Reading, Writing, Listening and Talking. They are viewed as a whole at St Matthew’s, not separate subjects. Our understanding is that children learn by doing. We expect children to learn to read by reading and to write by writing. The underlying skills of phonics, spelling and grammar are taught in context. We utilise the First Steps literacy resources.

Mathematics

Mathematics is a search for patterns and relationships. It helps children to solve problems, improve their understanding of the world and meet their needs. The curriculum is divided between the main areas of mathematical development: data, number, measurement, patterns and algebra, space and geometry and working mathematically. Activities combine a hands-on or practical approach with recording and problem solving.

The Arts

This Key Learning Area encompasses dance, drama, the visual arts and music, which assist the development of the whole person, providing for self expression, promoting growth and encouraging personal responses. Music at St Matthew’s is taught by a specialist teacher in all year levels.

History

Awareness of history is an essential characteristic of any society, and historical knowledge is fundamental to understanding ourselves and others. It promotes the understanding of societies, events, movements and developments that have shaped humanity from earliest times. It helps students appreciate how the world and its people have changed, as well as the significant continuities that exist to the present day.
Languages
This involves a study of the Japanese language, with an emphasis on oral language and culture. It is taught by a specialist instructor for each class from Kindergarten – Year 6 for 30 minutes each week.

Science
Science provides opportunities for students to develop an understanding of important science concepts and processes, the practices used to develop scientific knowledge, of science’s contribution to our culture and society, and its applications in our lives. The curriculum supports students to develop the scientific knowledge, understandings and skills to make informed decisions about local, national and global issues.

Technology
Technology is an integral part of our teaching at St Matthew’s. We understand that children need to become well equipped with appropriate skills and understandings to be active participants in our technological society. Through this curriculum area students will engage in experiences which involve technological content, processes and skills.

This Subject Area includes Information Communication Technology, which is also used as a tool across all other Subject Areas and assists our students with their learning and skill development. We have two Computer Laboratories, and all classrooms are linked through a network of multi-media computers and an interactive whiteboard. As well as providing for the use of the basic Microsoft software package, each student has direct supervised access to the world through the internet. Skills such as research and communication are enhanced through the use of this media.

Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
PDHPE helps children to see themselves as active, creative, responsible and informed decision makers. It seeks to develop a sense of well being and personal worth and tries to cultivate those understandings and skills that will help the child develop and maintain satisfying relationships. To complement the skills we are aiming to develop, we also make use of various free sporting clinics provided by trained instructors from local sporting codes.

We provide dance and swimming programs using specialist teachers at an additional cost to parents. Each year children from Years 2 – 6 participate in school carnivals for athletics, cross country and swimming. The children who do well at these carnivals are chosen to participate in the Primary Schools Sports Association (PSSA) representative carnivals.
**Student Services**

**Library**
St Matthew’s has a well-resourced library that is available for student use at all times. All classes have the opportunity to borrow library books weekly. The teacher librarian works with each class in a scheduled lesson each week on developing information skills.

All children need a library bag to protect the books they borrow to take home. The borrowing period is usually for one week and previously borrowed books need to be returned prior to re-borrowing. Children may borrow over the school holiday breaks with the exception of the Christmas period when the library closes in Week 8 of Term 4 for stock-take and administration.

Children will also have the chance to visit the library during lunchtimes on specified days. During this time they can return and borrow, read, play board games, work on research projects or draw.

Parent assistance in the library is always welcome. Parents often assist with the shelving of books and the covering of new resources. Please see the Teacher Librarian if you would like to help.

**Computer and Internet Use**
St Matthew’s computer laboratories and classroom computers will be utilised, where appropriate, by the students during lessons in all subjects. We endeavour to integrate technology purposefully across all curriculum areas to enrich the children’s learning.

We have an Internet usage agreement, which outlines policy for usage and is required to be signed by parents and children annually.

**Canteen**
The canteen aims to provide a variety of foods with good nutritional value and follows the ‘Healthy Canteen’ strategy. It is run by a coordinator employed by the Community Council, who is assisted by volunteer parents. All parents are invited to work in the Canteen on a rostered basis - usually one day per month. Lunches are ordered by listing the items required (you will receive a price list very early in the term) on a paper bag, together with the child’s name and class, and placing the correct money in the bag. This is to be handed to the child’s teacher. Healthy snacks and drinks are available over the counter.

**Book Club**
Ashton Scholastic provides a ‘Book Club’ service for our school. This is organised by volunteer parents, who give generously of their time. This service is a good way to buy appropriate literature at reasonable prices for your child.

**School Banking**
This service is provided by the Commonwealth Bank and once again it is well organised by volunteer parents. School banking for Kindergarten children does not start immediately. You will be notified of the day and the procedure.
Out of School Hours Care
The School Board has contracted Belconnen Community Services to provide an on-site before and after school care service. Details of the cost of this service are available from the coordinator of the service. Before school care runs from 7.30 am to 8.50 am and after school care from 3.00 pm to 6.00 pm. The contact telephone number for St Matthew’s Out of School Hours Care is 02 6278 8188.

Learning Support
The Learning Support Program (Special Needs Program) supports and encourages those children in the school who, for a variety of reasons, require extra learning assistance. Children are generally identified by their class teacher. We recognise that some children require additional support in order to maximise their educational opportunities.

Our Learning Support Program offers learning support from Resource Teachers and Learning Support Assistants. The most effective practice for helping learners with special needs is one which involves a concerted and collaborative approach between the class teacher, home and the Learning Support Team. Flexible approaches are taken to address different student needs.

School Counsellor
CatholicCare and the Catholic Education Office provide the school with a Counsellor for one and a half days each fortnight. The role of the Counsellor is to be available to parents, students and teachers who seek advice or assistance with family, social or behavioural problems. Parents may request an interview with the counsellor or a teacher may refer a child. Before teacher referral, parents are contacted and their permission sought. Generally, primary aged students do not refer themselves to the counsellor without parental consent.

School Medical Service
The School Medical Service provided by ACT Health visits the school each year. Kindergarten children receive medical screening. Other children are seen on request. Parents are contacted if there is any need for referral to appropriate specialist services.

Clothing Pool
The Clothing Pool is an auxiliary committee of the Parents and Friends Association run by volunteers. The main aim is to provide a service to parents wishing to buy pre-loved school uniform items which are in good condition, and to sell some new uniform items such as hats, school logo jumpers and school logo t-shirts. The clothing pool is located in the school building, and the operating hours are Fridays from 2.45 pm – 3.10 pm.
Health Information

**Sickness at School**
In the event that a student becomes ill at school they will be accompanied to the Sick Bay where they are supervised while parents are being contacted. The provision of an updated emergency contact number is vital in these situations.

**Accidents**
If an accident occurs during school hours the following procedure will be followed:
- For minor accidents, a staff member trained in first aid will treat the child, and if necessary inform parents.
- For more serious accidents, an ambulance will be called and parents notified.
- Sick or injured children will be supervised while they are waiting for parents to attend to them.

**Medication**
If your child has any special medical needs or conditions, (eg. asthma, allergies, epilepsy) it is essential that the school be given this information. Please record any relevant information on the enrolment form and discuss your child’s needs with the principal.

If a child is to take medication at school, written consent and directions for the teacher must be supplied with the medication in its original container. Medication cannot be administered without this form being completed. With liquid medicine a measuring device must be supplied to ensure the correct dosage is given.

Medication (other than asthma medication) is not to be stored in the children’s bags or desks. Lockable storage is provided at the School Office where a record is maintained of all medication administered. The class teacher must be made aware of any children with asthma medication in their bags.

**Immunisation and Infectious Diseases**
The ACT Public Health Regulations reflect an attempt to prevent children from contracting the eight childhood vaccine-preventable diseases. You must present an Immunisation Record form at the time of enrolment. If your child is not immunised, you must follow the procedures set out by ACT Health. Children who are not immunised will be excluded from school when there is an outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease in the school.

The quarantine periods for infectious diseases such as measles, chickenpox, mumps etc is stipulated by the ACT Department of Health. If your child contracts one of these diseases, you are asked to notify the school immediately and to observe the mandatory school exclusion periods.
Fruit Break

St Matthew’s has adopted a fruit break in classrooms at around 10.00 am each day. Research has shown that the fructose (sugar) found in fruit promotes brain activity and can help boost energy levels in the middle of the long morning work session.

Parents are asked to send only fresh fruit for the fruit break as dried fruit and some other fruit snacks are high in sugar. Parents may like to send in some wipes to the classroom for sticky fingers.

For younger children the fruit should be chopped and put into a small container, as this makes it easier for little people to eat. Grapes, strawberries, watermelon and fruits in season are suggested. Children who do not bring fruit for the fruit break continue with their class work.
Beginning School -  
A Few Tips for Starting Kindergarten

Toileting  Teach your child to use the toilet independently. Explain that children’s toilets in schools use paper towels to dry hands, and that used paper towel must be put in a bin.

Bags  Ensure that your child can identify his/her school bag. A special key ring, a piece of ribbon or their photograph in a plastic wallet can help the children easily identify their bags.

Shoelaces  Practise tying laces. Not all children know how to laces when starting Kinder, but all should have mastered this skill by the end of Kindergarten. This can only be achieved by practice at home.

Jumpers  Let your child practise putting on and taking off his/her jumper independently.

Labels  Label everything: shoes, hats, bags, jumpers, drink bottles, lunch boxes.

Little Lunch and Big Lunch  Teach your child to differentiate between little lunch (morning tea) and big lunch in the lunch box. Teach your child how to unwrap cling wrap from sandwiches, how to open packets and cheese triangles, open drink bottles and lunch boxes.

Reading  Read with your child every day. Allow him/her to hold the book and to talk about interesting characters, information, events.

Pencil Grip  Encourage your child to practise holding a pencil correctly using the thumb and first two fingers only.

Practise writing first name  Spend some time teaching your child to write their name. When writing your child’s name use a capital letter for the first letter and lower case letters for the rest of their name.

Alexander   Grace   Jemima   x ADAM   Adam