



St Columba's Yeoval

School Handbook



Faith-Friendship-Futures

Message from the Principal

St Columba's is a Catholic School where parents and teachers strive together to develop the full potential of each child spiritually, academically, socially, emotionally and physically.

We recognise that parents are the main educators of their children and it is our aim, therefore, to strengthen and support parents in the fulfilment of their responsibilities.

Equally we recognise the fact that each child is unique and has a right to develop his/her individual talents, especially in developing meaningful relationships with God and with fellow human beings.

Being a small school we consider ourselves an extension of the family unit, a place where our pupils can feel safe and comfortable. A place where pupils, staff and parents work and cooperate on a caring and Christian level and each individual is considered a worthwhile and talented person who has something to offer our community.

This handbook aims to keep parents informed of school policy and procedures. It is hoped that it will lead to a greater awareness of the ideals and standards of our school.

Glen Brown
Principal

Our Patron Saint

St Columba, the most famous of the saints of Scotland was really an Irishman, born around 521 in County Donegal. He was sent to several different schools, all run by monks and finished his studies when an outbreak of the plague caused his last school to close.

He returned to Donegal and for fifteen years he toured Northern Ireland preaching the Gospel and founding monasteries. War broke out between the clans of the North and the followers of King Diarmid and sad as it is to relate, Columba was rightly blamed for their deaths.

In an attempt to ease his conscience Columba vowed to win 3000 men for Christ. In 563 he set off for Scotland with twelve companions. He landed at Iona where he built a monastery from which he and his fellow monks set out on missionary journeys that were to take them through out Scotland. On Iona, Columba and his monks lived a very simple and hard life.

As he grew old Columba became a much gentler man and his influence and that of Iona is still felt today. In fact he once prophesied. "To this place, small and unimportant as it is, great devotion will be paid, not only by Scotsmen and their Kings, but foreign kings and their subjects".

One of his close friends wrote his biography. In it he describes Columba as a man who never let a single hour pass without prayer, or thought to God. To all he appeared loving, serene and holy rejoicing in the joy of the Holy Spirit.

St Columba's School History

Our school began in the shadows of the Great Depression and it is a tribute to the faith and generosity of the Catholics of Yeoval.

In late 1928 a delegation of men approached Bishop Norton with a view to building a Convent and School so fundraising began immediately. The contract for the Convent and School was let to Mr Rennie, a Sydney builder. The cost was approximately £2700.00 The new Convent design was Italian style by Mr Bolton Milane, the well-known Sydney architect and promised to be a gem of ecclesiastical design.

In January 1929 his Lordship Dr Norton, Bishop of Bathurst submitted a request which was made to MM Marcella, Good Samaritan Sisters, that a small community of Sisters be given for Yeoval.

Mother M Basil acceded to Dr Norton's request and preparations began for the little band to set out for the West.

Early in July, Mother General, accompanied by M M Alphensus Souter, left Sydney for the new foundation.

The Sisters, on reaching their journey's end, were surprised and delighted to find a beautiful little convent of concrete in the Italian style of architecture and of very pleasing proportions. The harbingers of the Community were given a splendid reception by the enthusiastic committee of ladies and gentlemen.

By the end of a week, the new Community had arrived and began their work in the school. Mother M Raymund Catt, Sisters Malachy O'Connell, Cletus Devlin and Imelda Small were pioneers of this second Convent of Good Samaritan in the Bathurst Diocese.

His Lordship, Dr Norton, blessed the new Convent and School on July 7, 1929. He was assisted by Rev Monsignor D O'Kennedy and n Cooney, Rev Fathers Searson, Kelly, Dunne, Lawler and Gummer.

The Bishop warmly congratulated Father Searson and the people of Yeoval on having brought to completion two buildings of which they could justly be proud.

The General of the Sisters of the Good Samaritan with the new Community for Yeoval arrived here on 16 July 1929. The school term began on Monday 22 July.

On the 22 July 1943 the Sisters of St Joseph's Perthville arrive to take up duties in the school.

The first community in 1943 consisted of Sisters Margaret, Leonare, Luigi and Fidelma.

During those early years they concerned themselves with the child's spiritual upbringing and instilled a love of God and spiritual aspirations.

In January 1964, owing to a shortage of Nuns, pupils completing year Six went on to Yeoval Central School for their Secondary education.

Yeoval's church/school was operating with a curtain separating the Sanctuary from the classroom on weekdays. Each Friday it was converted back to a Church. The priest had a room attached to the end of the building where he stayed overnight when Mass was at Yeoval. It as a weather board building and remained the Infants School up to the end of 1975. The Secondary was a corrugated building and later became the library. In the 1950's an army hut was purchased from Parkes and it became the Church and primary school; the desks were such that they could be converted into pews for Mass.

This was extensively renovated with a Disadvantaged Schools Grant in 1975.

The Sisters were never to enjoy the new school. On 28 December 1975, St Columba's Convent closed after a century of dedicated teaching. The last community of Sisters, Vianney, Aidan and Sabina were replaced by lay teaching staff.

St Columba's has continued to improve its facilities over the years and more recently in 2009 when a new library was constructed under the Building the Educational Revolution (BER) program of the Australian Labor Government.

St Columba's Mission Statement

Aims and objectives of St Columba's School

St Columba's School has been established as part of the plan by which the Church makes visible and real its teaching ministry. The Catholic school is more than an educative institution; it is the instrument by which the Catholic Church proclaims the work of the Gospel and the teachers employed in St Columba's School are ministers in the name of the Church.

Teachers therefore, are called to bring professional competence and a high standard of excellence to their teaching but their responsibilities make demands for beyond professional skills and competence. Teachers must enable children to see and know the richness and joy of a life in accordance with the teachings of Christ.

Enrolment Policy

St Columba's School operates within the Parish of St Patrick's Wellington and operates under the supervision of the School Principal who is appointed by the Catholic Education Office with the approval of the Bishop of the Diocese and the Parish Priest.

Since the school has been established with the primary aim of spreading the work of the Gospels, preference in enrolments is given to children of parents who are members of the Parish Community. Children of non-practising Catholics and non Catholic parents may be enrolled if a place is available provided the parents of these children do not hold views that are contradictory to the values being taught in the school.

All children enrolled in the school must participate in the whole of the school program and parents must be will to support these programs.

Before enrolment is accepted, parents must be prepared:-

To support the school's Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy.

To accept the uniform policy of the school

To pay school fees.

Enrolment packages are available from the school office.

School Fees

Fees are set by the Bishop of the Diocese for all schools of the Diocese. A condition of enrolment is that all fees will be paid in the term in which they fall due. If there are difficulties with payment of fees, parents are invited to meet with the Principal to make alternative arrangements. Consideration is given to those who may experience difficulty. A discount in fees is given for the second child and subsequent members of the family where the children are attending Catholic School.

A schedule of all fees and levies are given at the time of enrolment. Accounts are sent out for three terms only. In the fourth term no account is sent except where fees are outstanding.

Staff

Staff are appointed by the Catholic Education Office after interview and recommendation by the School Interview Panel Executive. When making application for a position on Staff, teachers are required to produce evidence that recognised qualifications have been achieved and wherever possible appropriate qualifications for teaching Religious Education.

Because this is a Catholic School teachers have been commissioned to carry on the teaching Mission of the Church. The pastoral care aspect of the teacher's role has been emphasised in the section on Pastoral Care and Discipline.

The School Executive consists of the Principal and the Parish Priest. The Parish Priest is the School Chaplain. He has a pastoral care role and is available to Staff, Parents and children as required. The Chaplain is available for Mass and the Sacraments and visits the school providing a visible presence among the children.

St Columba's School provides class from Kindergarten to Year Six. The school is divided into Infants and Primary groups. The Principal also takes the role of Religious Education Coordinator and is granted release time from class to complete administrative duties. For this release time the school employs a part-time teacher.

Curriculum

The Curriculum offered by the school is determined by the Board of Studies, the Catholic Education Office and the teaching staff.

Key Learning Areas

Glen Brown see BOS

Excursions

Excursions form an important part of the educational program for our students. The local permission note is obtained from parents at the beginning of each year. This form covers all activities within Yeoval town limits.

For each excursion outside Yeoval an information and permission sheet is given to student participants. The permission slip must be signed and returned to the school.

A copy of the school's excursion policy can be obtained from the office.

Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy

The word "pastoral" is derived from the Latin "pastor", a shepherd. As a shepherd watches over the flock so a teacher should watch over and care for the children. As Christ cares for us, we should care for one another. Thus the School Community is built on care and service:

- To the Children at our school
- To the Parents
- To Staff Members
- To the church
- To the Wider Community

St Columba's School Rules

Aim: to develop quality relationships
To provide satisfying learning experiences
To establish an effective care network
To encourage self-discipline and responsible behaviour

Rule	How to Keep it
1 Respect Religious Values	Love god and acknowledge his authority Respect religious practices and places Respect priests and member of Religious communities Show reverence in the Church When you pray, pray reverently Take a stand for Gospel values
2 Love one Another	Speak politely to teachers and children Always have good manners Be kind and considerate to others Avoid anything that would cause injury or embarrassment to others Avoid threatening or intimidating behaviour Cooperate with school leaders Avoid any kind of favouritism
3 Learn All you can	Pay attention in class Be involved in School Activities Try to follow instructions Have all equipment ready before lessons start Present your best work Do your homework consistently Set yourself a goal
4 Earn the School a Good Name	Wear the Uniform with pride Always be well behaved Be helpful to visitors Always do your best Be a good sport Show self-discipline Be loyal to the school Obey bus rules Avoid obscene, indecent language or gesture
5 Respect all Staff members	Listen when a teacher is speaking If you interrupt, do so politely Call teachers by name Be cooperative and helpful
6 Be in the right place at the right time	Be on time for lessons Never miss school unnecessarily Stay in bounds Be organised

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 | Be Honest | Respect the property of others
Return anything you borrow
Always tell the truth
Never take anything that belongs to someone else
Hand in "found" property to the office |
| 8 | Look after the school | Handle equipment carefully
Report any damage to school property
Take care of buildings, grounds and furniture.
Keep the playground clean
Act responsibly when you have chores to do |
| 9 | Respect the Environment | Develop National Pride
Look after our trees
Don't waste water
Turn off heaters and lights when not needed
Dispose of rubbish thoughtfully |
| 10 | Be Cheerful | Smile
Join in activities with enthusiasm
Try to be friends with everyone
Be especially kind to children who are new, different or having problems
Learn to forgive and forget
Be a peacemaker |

Enforcement of School Rules

Acceptable behaviour is commended by affirmation including:

- Encouragement
- Assembly Recognition
- Praise
- Merit Certificates
- Student of the Week

Unacceptable Behaviour

This is discouraged by appropriate loss of privileges. These may be imposed by the class teacher or the Principal depending on the nature of the offence.

In Class

Reprimand
 In-class withdrawal
 Withdrawal from class (under supervision)
 Verbal or written apology required
 Completion of an assigned task
 Wasted time reclaimed in lunch hour (supervised)
 Interview with Principal
 Detention
 Interview with parent
 Negotiated behaviour – medication plan

On Playground:

Withdrawal from play
Playground community service
Interview with Principal
Detention

In the rare case where a child's behaviour is insolent, persistently disobedient, violent, or where misbehaviour warrants further modifying action, parents will be notified.

Procedure include:

1. Warning – the child shall be given a verbal warning
2. Loss of privileges, including play
3. Formal notification of Parents – Parents are made aware of problems by telephone, note or visit.
4. Referral to outside agency
5. Suspension – The child may be suspended from school for a period not exceeding five days
6. Expulsion – a child may only be expelled with the express permission of the Executive Director of School and His Lordship the Bishop of Bathurst

Corporal Punishment

Corporal Punishment, involving physical action by a staff member, is not permitted in school.

The School does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Parent – Teacher Communication

The network for communication includes the following:

- Parents are free to contact the class teacher whenever they feel the need. In the interests of the rest of the students in the class they are asked to arrange a convenient time outside teaching time. Lessons should not be interrupted. The Principal is always willing to discuss any problem but again it is important to arrange a suitable time as the Principal has regular classes also.
- The Newsletter is sent home each week with the eldest child in the family. If for any reason you miss out on the Newsletter please contact the school for a copy.
- Report cards are sent home at the end of Terms 2 and 4 and a progress report is sent at the end of Term 1.
- Parent-Teacher interviews are organised at the beginning of Term 2. They can be arranged at other times if the need arises. All parents are encouraged to take these opportunities to meet with the teachers to discuss their child's progress.

Routine

School commences each day at 8.55am. Children should be in attendance at least five minutes before this time.

- Morning Assembly: 8.55am
- Lunch: 11.15am – 12noon
- Recess: 1.30pm – 2.00pm
- School ends: 3.10pm

Attendance

Children are legally required to attend school every school day unless there is a reasonable excuse for non – attendance. If a child is absent from school, Government Regulations require the parents to notify the school, either in writing verbally or in person, the reasons for such absence. Phone calls are appreciated but must be backed up with a note. Children also require a permission note from parents to be allowed to leave the school grounds to attend appointments or do messages. Where possible, appointments, music lessons etc should be organised out of school hours.

Children leaving school grounds – No child will be allowed to leave on his / her own verbal statement that permission has been given.

Playground Supervision

The playground is supervised from 8.30am until 3.30pm. The school cannot take responsibility for children's safety outside these hours unless by special arrangement.

Transport

Bus travel application forms are available at school.

Children waiting for parents must wait on the front veranda until parents arrive. Parents who collect children in cars are requested to park clear of the bus area. Encourage your children to WALK to your vehicle.

Those who walk or ride bikes are escorted by a teacher across Forbes Street. Bikes are not to be ridden in the school playground.

Please be clear and advise staff of any changes in routine. Younger children can sometimes be confused and unsure of instruction.

Homework

A link between home and school, to build sound study habits and to reinforce, consolidate concepts taught.

Children have a very full day at school and in primary school are not expected to do hours of homework. The following time limits are suggested:

Kinder – Year 2	10 minutes when required
Years 3 – 6	1-20 minutes consistently

Library

The School library is available to all pupils

Pupils borrowing books are required to have a bag to carry books so as to avoid damage to the books. It would be appreciated if parents would cooperate in this matter by ensuring the correct use and handling of library books and materials taken home.

Lunches

Lunch orders may be ordered each Friday from the local takeaway shop.

A price list is circulated at the beginning of each term.

Students have access to their own Fridge, sandwich toaster & microwave. All responsibility of what.....

School Banking

Pupils who wish to bank money at school may open an account with the Catholic Development Fund. Bank books are collected each Tuesday morning by CDF Representative who is the schools secretary.

Parents and Friends' Association

This is a dedicated group of parents and community members who meet on the third Monday of each month in the School Library. The main activities include fundraising, working bees and social occasions and they make an invaluable contribution to the School. All parents and community members are invited and encouraged to become part of the P & F. Voluntary assistance saves the school considerable expense and also establishes school spirit and pride in what the school can achieve through cooperation. At no time is the P & F a place for parents to air their complaints and grievances.

Health

Immunisation: Parents enrolling children in Kindergarten are required by the Public Health (Amendment) act 1992, to provide an Immunisation Certificate at the time of school enrolment. This ensures that the school has the information to enable them to follow the guidelines in the Act in the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease in the school. This is not compulsory Immunisation. Parents always have the right of choices.

Information on immunisation can be found at www.nsw.gov.au/immunisation

Uniform

Children must wear full school uniform at all times. The uniform is as follows:

SUMMER

Girls

Pink & white check dress
White socks/black shoes
School Hat

Boys

Blue Shirt
Grey Shorts
Grey socks, Black Shoes
School Hat

WINTER

Girls

Maroon tunic or slacks
Fawn blouse
School Tie
Maroon school jumper
Fawn socks or stockings
Black shoes

Boys

Grey trousers
Blue shirt
School Tie
Maroon School jumper
Grey socks
Black shoes

Note: Trackpants are not an acceptable part of school uniform

Sports

Girls / Boys

Sports Shirt (with motif and royal blue collar)
Royal blue Unisex Short
Royal blue track top (with motif)
Royal blue track pants
School hat
White socks
White joggers

- Hats track tops, ties, sports shirts and shorts are purchased through the school. Some second-hand clothing is also available.
- Joggers and sneakers are only to be worn on Sports Day.

Jewellery

Jewellery is not part of the uniform, and should be restricted to the following:-

- A **pair** of stud/sleeper earrings
- Watch
- One signet ring
- Necklace with crucifix

Nail polish is not to be worn

Hair – should be neat and tidy at all times. Long hair must be tied back and not in eyes.

Hats are part of the school uniform and may be purchased through the school.

Marking Clothes

All articles of clothing, School and Sports, must be clearly marked with students name. If your child loses any articles at all, please see the teacher immediately. Students are encouraged to be responsible for their own belongings.