

YEAR 8

SEMESTER BULLETINS



2025 SEMESTER 2

Welcome to Semester Two! As we come to the end of another Semester filled with activities and adventures, we want to give a huge shout-out to each one of our Year 8 students, with the support of their families, who contribute and demonstrate our theme of 'Sisterhood'. The girls' active participation has truly made a difference in creating a vibrant and supportive school community and we are really proud of the way in which the girls continue to be involved.

This semester continues to bring fresh opportunities, both curricular (with new elective rotations) and extracurricular.

During Semester Two, our students will continue to be engaged in the Resilience Project during our Pastoral Care lessons. Students will continue to look at how Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness and Emotional Literacy interconnect and work together to build resilience.

Key Dates for Semester 2

- Interhouse Athletics - 25/07
- Mashed Theatre Performance - 30/07
- Year 8 Combined Pastoral Disco - 29/08
- Pupil Free Day - 05/09
- Last Day of Term 3 - 19/09

This term we welcome back Mashed Theatre, who will be presenting to the Juniors on Wednesday, 30 July, showing the performance of **Teenager**. This well-being show explores the dangers of social media apps and trends that present real-world dangers to unwary teenagers as well as presenting mental health issues that can be influenced by obsessions with social media and "clout-chasing".

Attendance

As we navigate another exciting semester, it's crucial to reflect on one of the fundamental pillars of student success: attendance. Attending classes regularly isn't just a matter of fulfilling a requirement; it plays a pivotal role in shaping a student's educational journey and future opportunities.

Why Attendance Matters:

1. **Academic Achievement:** Consistent attendance directly correlates with better academic performance. Each lesson builds upon the last, and missing classes can lead to gaps in understanding that are difficult to fill later on. By attending regularly, students can keep pace with the curriculum and engage meaningfully with their studies
2. **Development of Responsibility:** Regular attendance instils discipline and responsibility in students. It teaches them the importance of showing up on time and being ready to learn—skills that are invaluable as they progress through their academic and professional lives
3. **Building Connections:** School is not just about being academic; it's also a place for social and emotional growth. Attending classes allows students to interact with peers and teachers, fostering relationships that can enrich their educational experience and provide a support network.
4. **Preparation for the Future:** In the real world, punctuality and reliability are highly valued traits. By prioritising attendance now, students are preparing themselves for the expectations they will encounter in higher education and their future careers

Tips for Maintaining Good Attendance:

- **Set a Routine:** Establish a daily schedule that includes ample time for sleep and preparation
- **Communicate:** If students are unable to attend school, please ensure you have followed the procedure of letting the College know to ensure all absences are explained. Further to this, if there is a reason your child is reluctant to attend school, please make time to meet with their classroom teacher or me to discuss this
- **Highlight the Benefits:** Remind students of the positive outcomes associated with good attendance, such as improved grades and increased opportunities

We are committed to supporting our students in their educational journey. By emphasising the importance of attendance, we are setting our students up for success both inside and outside the classroom.

2026 Leadership

This term, we will begin the process of selecting our Junior Leaders for 2026. We look forward to allowing Year 8 students the opportunity to nominate themselves to be leaders of the Junior School in 2026. We will be looking for students who demonstrate commitment to the SMMC community and the ability to work effectively with others. More information to come out about this soon!

I wish all Year 8 students and their families a great Semester Two! As always, please contact me or your child's Pastoral Care Teacher if you have any questions or concerns about your daughter's wellbeing at school. Here's to fostering a strong 'Sisterhood' at SMMC. Together, let's continue to support, uplift, and inspire one another as we embark on another exciting Semester.

Mrs Gemma Roberts

Pastoral Middle Leader - Year 8

LEARNING & TEACHING

Welcome to Semester Two at SMMC!

I encourage all parents to review Semester One Reports with your daughters and set some goals for Semester Two. Pastoral Care Teachers are a wonderful support in this space should you need any support with attendance or pastoral issues. Attending school each and every day is vitally important in order to ensure your daughter receives the very best opportunities for

success here at SMMC. It is also vital that students are present for all assessments. The College is unable to reschedule assessment pieces for students who leave for holidays early. For easy reference our assessment policy and calendars are linked [here](#). These will be available from the end of Week 2.

To assist parents with preparation for the semester ahead, here are some key contacts for staff who are leading curriculum areas at our school.

Curriculum Area	Curriculum Leader	Email address
Religious Education	Rachel Harrison (Assistant Principal Identity & Mission)	rharrison6@smmc.catholic.edu.au
English	Correna Neumann	cneumann1@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Maths	Irma Lapico	ilapico@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Science	Belinda Coombe	bcoombe1@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Humanities	Kath Burke	kburke4@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Health and Physical Education	Kimberly Cameron	kcameron1@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Arts	Chris Davis	cdavis3@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Digital & Design Technologies	Cathy Jago	cjago3@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Food & Textiles Technologies	Tanya Krause (acting)	tkrause3@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Languages	Cathy Spencer	cspencer@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Senior Pathways and VET	Katherine Truntic	ktruntic@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Inclusive Education	Paula Gabrielli	pgabrielli@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Career Development Practitioner	Marianne Milani	mmilani2@smmc.catholic.edu.au
Indigenous Education	Louise Martin	lmartin20@smmc.catholic.edu.au

Other useful curriculum links can be found below:

- [Curriculum @ SMMC](#)
- [Attendance and Absence During Term Time](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)

Once again, please do not hesitate to contact either the Curriculum Leaders or myself if we can assist in any way.

Wishing you the very best for Semester Two.

Ms Melissa Pearce
Deputy Principal - Teaching & Learning

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Religious Education is a significant component of the entire Religious Life of the College package. All teachers at St Margaret Mary's College contribute to this, as do our students, with various opportunities also offered to families.

The Religious Life of the College is lived out in a variety of ways:

Daily Prayer:

Throughout the year, our students participate respectfully in a variety of prayer experiences within Pastoral Care and Religion lessons. This includes opportunities to write prayers, participate in Christian Meditation and college liturgies.

Year Level Retreats:

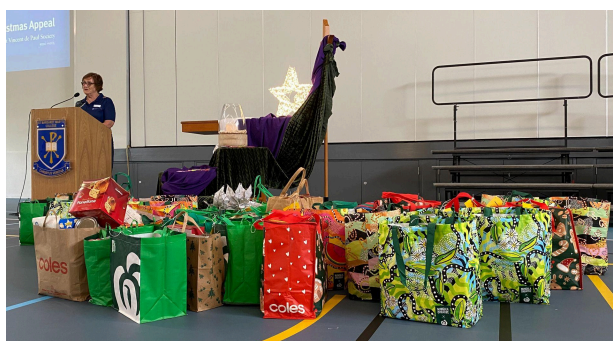
This semester our Year 7, 11 and 12 students have retreat days. During our retreats great things happen. Students are encouraged

to: disconnect a little from their daily school life; find time for reflection; get to know themselves and each other better; recharge; rejuvenate; and my favourite - strengthen their friendships. The St Margaret Mary's retreats are themed in a way that sees students grow through each experience.
story.

Service Activities:



Good Neighbour Day will see us once again working with Wellington House and Penola Place. The gift of community service involves small teams of students, with a staff member, going out to clean the homes of people in need in our parish area. This is a lovely way to spend constructive time with members of our local community. Our Samaritan Angels are gifting their time on Friday afternoons to create 'fiddle blankets' for the dementia ward at Townsville University Hospital, felt hearts for the Kindness Project and our beginner sewers are learning sewing skills from Mrs McCarthy by creating bunting. Christmas card making and taking our choir to Loreto House for a Christmas concert is always a highlight of our year. While collecting Christmas food items and packing them for the St Vincent De Paul Christmas Appeal will also be part of our Term 4 Social Justice program.



Calendrical Events:

Save the dates for the following:

Catholic Education Week: 27 July - 1 August;

Samaritan Day: 19 September;

Graduation Liturgy: 21 November;

Christmas Liturgy: 28 November.



Religious Education outline - Semester Two

Year 8

Unit 4: <i>Through Words & Actions</i>	<p>Students consider and organise evidence from the Acts of the Apostles to explain the significance of some key events, individuals and groups in the life of the early Church. They consider and organise patterns of change and continuity in the Church from c. 650 CE – c. 1750 CE, identifying the impact of the writings and key messages of significant reformers in the Church at that time</p> <p>Assessment: Exam</p>
Unit 5: <i>The Reformers</i>	<p>In this first unit, students explore how believers, past and present continue the mission of Jesus in the world, in times of challenge and change</p> <p>Assessment: Assignment</p>
Unit 6: <i>The Church Today</i>	<p>Students evaluate and draw conclusions about the ways in which the Church is present and active in the world today: participation of believers in liturgy and other personal and communal prayer experiences; responding to emerging moral questions; practicing the cardinal virtues; and giving witness to the ecumenical spirit.</p> <p>Assessment: Project - Advertisement Creation</p>

Mrs Rachel Harrison
 Assistant Principal - Identity & Mission

ENGLISH

Welcome to Semester Two! During Term Three, students will study First Nations Poetry and focus on the voices of our land. This study will allow students to engage in a range of First Nations Poetry from Australia and around the world.

Task 3: Analytical Essay – Supervised (Exam)

In Term Four, students will consolidate their learning for the year by focusing on a pitch for Shark Tank. They will create a sales pitch to revamp an existing product to suit social or environmental needs of modern consumers.

Task 4: Persuasive Oral Presentation

Please remember, as per the College's Assessment Policy, that if your daughter is absent on the day of assessment and cannot submit their work to Turnitin, upon their return to school, they

will need to complete an application for Special Provisions. If your daughter will be absent for assessment due to a holiday or sporting commitments, they need to submit their work on or before the due date.

Mrs Correna Neumann
Curriculum Middle Leader - English

SCIENCE

Betty Hay was a trailblazing developmental biologist who revolutionised our understanding of how cells grow, change, and regenerate. Her work on limb regeneration in amphibians revealed that specialised cells could revert to a more flexible state - an insight that has influenced everything from stem cell research to regenerative medicine. Hay's passion for discovery and her mentorship of young scientists helped pave the way for women in biology. Following from last term, the girls in Year 8 will continue their studies in Biology. They will explore how the body's organs and systems work together to maintain life. Students will investigate the structure and function of cells, tissues, and organs, and how these systems interact to support survival. From the circulatory system to the digestive tract, students will gain a deeper appreciation for the complexity and coordination of the human body.

Emily Balskus is a cutting-edge chemist at Harvard University whose research bridges chemistry and microbiology. She investigates how gut microbes influence human health by producing or breaking down chemicals in our bodies. Her work is helping scientists understand the chemical language of the microbiome - an area with huge potential for new treatments and diagnostics. In 2020, she received the prestigious Alan T. Waterman Award for her groundbreaking research.

Following our unit in Biology, the girls will compare physical and chemical changes and identify indicators of energy change in chemical reactions. They learn about how substances react to form new substances, and the evidence that a reaction has occurred. The girls will identify the difference between physical and chemical changes, with a particular focus on the signs that distinguish the two types of change. They then take on the role of a materials scientist and investigate which of a selection of materials might be the best choice for a specific situation, using their newly acquired knowledge to develop their critical thinking skills.

Each term, the girls will complete an assessment targeting specific scientific skills that have been the focus of one, and unit tests to gauge their understanding of the content covered.

Year 8 Science teaching staff for Semester Two are:

- | | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| 8.1 and 8.5 | Gemma Roberts |
| 8.2 | Matthew Brescianini |
| 8.3 | Ashleigh Rhodes |
| 8.4 | Georgia Stayte |

Mrs Belinda Coombe
Curriculum Middle Leader - Science

HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The HPE theory lessons this term will focus on the Health Benefits of Physical Fitness. Students will be investigating their own diet, lifestyle and personal fitness levels to make an assessment on their own physical health. They will also investigate the impact physical activity has on their health, the opportunities for physical activity in the community, and the influences on their thoughts and opinions about physical activity. Students will be tasked with producing a report that analyses either their level of physical activity or their diet and how this can be improved to reduce the risk of Lifestyle Diseases.

In Term Three practical lessons, the Year 8 students will be participating in AFL and Cricket.

In Term Four practical lessons, the students are focusing on Fitness and Skipping challenge activities.

Students are reminded of the importance of active participation in all practical lessons. If a student is not able to participate, they must bring a note of explanation from a parent or guardian.

Teachers:

- 8.1 Michael Dear
- 8.2 Rebecca Little
- 8.3 Mitchell Bebb
- 8.4 Michael Dear
- 8.5 Rebecca Little

Mrs Kim Cameron

Curriculum Middle Leader - Health and Physical Education

FOOD & TEXTILES TECHNOLOGY

Step outside your comfort zone,
Explore the unknown,
And discover the wonders that await.

Food Design

Creativity is about doing something where you don't know the outcome, that means it's about taking a risk. It is the ability to come up with unique and novel ideas that have not been explored before. Creativity is not just about generating new ideas; it is also about combining existing ideas in new and innovative ways. In design, creativity is used to explore and generate a wide range of solutions to a problem.

This year, in the SMMC Food & Textiles Department, we are encouraging our students **to take a risk** with their learning. If no risks were ever taken in the food industry, consumers would never have experienced the tantalizing flavours of sour blueberry or salted caramel, or enjoyed the range of dairy-free and gluten-free products.

We will also be encouraging our students to be mindful of the waste that they create and look at ways in which we can repurpose ingredients into other food solutions.

Students will use the phases of design thinking to investigate innovation within the kitchen. They will empathise (understand the consumer/client), define the problem, ideate ideas, create prototypes, test, and then refine their design. In Term 3 students will design a new utensil and also create a healthy handheld food solution for teenage consumers.

They will investigate a Food Design Company, namely Dreamfarm, to identify how companies are creating and refining everyday products to better meet client needs, for example, a whisk that flattens and takes up less room in the kitchen drawer.

The students will collaborate as a pair to complete the food challenge, thus they will be busy brainstorming potential ideas and then trialing their best solution.

In the second part of the semester, the unit, *'War on Waste'*, will challenge students to design and produce a trending 'Use it up Menu item' product to show how they can demonstrate

sustainability and healthy eating. This unit uses many resources from the Oz Harvest Feast Program.

An increasing range of culinary and food analysis skills will be developed throughout the semester. Students will become more food literate by being able to identify how they can incorporate the Australian Guidelines to Healthy Eating into their everyday foods. Food Design & Technology also helps to develop students' literacy and numeracy skills as they need to read and follow recipe steps, measure and weigh ingredients, and perhaps, modify ingredient amounts to change the serving size.

We love to see what the students cook at home and encourage them to share their photos and recipes with their teachers.

Teacher: Mrs Krause (08 FTE.1) and Mrs Orman (08 FTE.2)

Textile Design

Creativity is about doing something where you don't know the outcome, that means it's about taking a risk. It is the ability to come up with unique and novel ideas that have not been explored before. Creativity is not just about generating new ideas; it is also about combining existing ideas in new and innovative ways. In design, creativity is used to explore and generate a wide range of solutions to a problem.

If no risks were ever taken in the textile industry, where would we have been without Velcro being invented to secure openings or long-sleeved swimsuits and rashies to help protect against damage to the skin from the sun?

Our first unit, '*Zip it Up*', supports our environmental focus by challenging students to design & produce a lined zippered pouch that uses small scraps of fabric from the stash in the Textile Room. A colour scheme of crazy patch will be on one side of the pouch, and on the reverse side, a stitched brand mascot that the students will design. Students will also learn how to insert a zip, and do some hand stitching, as well as further developing their sewing skills from Year 7. The students will document the phases of design thinking, including investigating, generating ideas, prototyping, and evaluating in a project folio. We are very excited for this unit to see the amazing ideas the students design.

In the second part of the semester, our focus will be on denim and different techniques that can be used to create products to be sold at local handmade markets. To understand environmentally friendly natural fibres, we will investigate the benefits of cotton and wool and the emerging technology associated with these fibres.

Teacher: Mrs Anderson (08 TEX.1) and Ms Battistel (08 TEX.4)

Ms Tanya Krause

Curriculum Middle Leader - Food & Textile Technology

HUMANITIES

This semester, all classes will be studying Business in Term 3 and Geography in Term 4. Classes will be learning about Consumer Rights, with a focus on Buy Smart, this term. In the fourth term, all Year 8 classes will study Geography, with a focus on changing nations, and how different environments shape how and where we live.

To be able to do her best in her Humanities subjects, it is recommended for your daughter to:

- Bring all required materials to class
- Complete all classwork and homework
- Work effectively on assessment in class time provided
- Hand in a plan or draft of assessment

- Be proactive and ask questions, or when necessary, for help from her teacher

We are lucky enough to have a fantastic blend of enthusiastic, creative and passionate teachers working with the Year 8s this semester. Mrs Nadine Orman teaches 08HUM.1. Ms Rachel Walsh will work with 08HUM.2. Ms Florinda Battstel is the class teacher for 08HUM.3. Mr Lincoln Miller will be working with 08HUM.4. Ms Chelsea Clay is looking forward to working with 08HUM.5.

If you have any questions about your daughter's Humanities subject, please first contact her class teacher.

Mrs Kath Burke
Curriculum Middle Leader - Humanities

MATHEMATICS

Supporting Your Daughter's Success in Mathematics

At St Margaret Mary's College, we are committed to helping your daughter grow in confidence and ability in Mathematics. Our senior students consistently achieve strong results - not just because of natural talent, but because of their effort, persistence, and strong learning habits.

To succeed in Maths, students need to:

✨ Be Active Participants

Maths is a subject that rewards regular practice. Completing set work, asking questions, and revising consistently are key to performing well - especially in exams.

✨ Seek Help Early

When concepts are challenging, we encourage students to ask questions, attend tutorials, and use resources like Math Online. Staying on top of learning - especially after absences - makes a big difference.

✨ Believe They Can Improve

A positive mindset matters. Maths is not about being born "good at it" - it's about being willing to try, make mistakes, and learn from them.

One of the simplest ways you can support your daughter at home is by helping her master her times tables. Quick recall of multiplication facts is the foundation for success in higher-level maths.

Together, we can help our girls build the skills, confidence, and resilience they need to thrive - not just in Maths, but in life.

Ms Irma Lapico
Curriculum Middle Leader - Mathematics

DIGITAL AND DESIGN TECHNOLOGIES

Welcome to Semester Two!

We're excited to begin another semester filled with valuable learning experiences and opportunities to make a positive impact in our community.

In Year 8 Design and Technologies, students will explore the Tiny House Movement by designing a fully functional home within a compact floor plan. This unit encourages students to think critically about space efficiency, sustainability, and modern design trends.

Students will create a scaled floor plan and an isometric drawing, applying Australian Standards to guide their design work. With a strong focus on sustainable residential architecture, they will research and incorporate environmentally responsible principles into their plans. As part of the Building and Design unit, students will also investigate real-world sustainable solutions in current architectural practices.

In Term Four, students will take on the challenge of empathetic design, working with children as their design stakeholders. Using a circular design process, they will gather feedback, develop ideas, and create a low-fidelity prototype through sketching. The goal is to produce designs that directly respond to the needs and wants of their stakeholders, fostering empathy, communication, and thoughtful problem-solving.

Ms Catherine Jago
Curriculum Middle Leader - Technologies

LANGUAGES

Language learning is such an incredibly enriching, rewarding, and fun experience. Here at St Margaret Mary's, we hope to provide as many opportunities as possible for students to develop and enjoy their skills. We will be having our SMMC Languages Movie Night in Week 2 of Term 3. In Week 7 of Term 3, there is Languages Speech Night, which allows students to show off their Japanese and Italian skills in a non-competitive environment.

As our Year 8 students approach subject selection for Year 9, we hope they will seriously consider continuing with learning Japanese or Italian. I've never met anyone who regrets having learned a language.

As this Chinese proverb says:

To learn a language is to have one more window from which to look at the world.

Italian

In Semester 2 Italian, we will focus on developing conversation skills about nationality, origins, and languages one speaks. Students will also learn to describe a city or place of interest and say why they would like to go there.

Japanese

This semester, Japanese students will continue to build on descriptions of people and proficiency with the Japanese alphabet. They will learn how to build sentences to describe people in their family, locations, and their own town. Students will also learn how to talk about their after-school activities and food.

Mrs Cathy Spencer
Curriculum Middle Leader - Languages

THE ARTS

Art

Year 8 Art will enjoy a semester of Art across two units of work: "The Space Around Us" and "A Second Life".

In the unit "The Space Around Us", students will explore how artists use positive and negative space in contemporary portraiture. They will compile a digital journal with artist research, reflections and experiments. They will think critically and creatively about how space creates meaning in a portrait. Finally, they will create their own finished self portrait artwork inspired by their chosen artist/model.

In the unit “A Second Life”, students will explore creating three-dimensional sculptures from found objects and mixed media. They will develop their artwork through careful planning and abstraction whilst also considering the presentation of their final developed work. They will also create an accompanying artist statement to explain their work in an exhibition.

Dance

The Year 8 Dance classes, led by Mrs Talise Falconieri, will build on their knowledge of the Elements of Dance this semester as they participate in various practical and theory activities. With a focus on Contemporary Dance, students will explore how dance can be used to tell a story or convey meaning, and how dance is an important aspect of First Nations culture. We hope to invite Glen Thomas from Cowboys House back to work with the students. He has delivered a fun and engaging dance workshop for the girls over the past few years and we would like to maintain this partnership. The girls will complete three assessment tasks over the course of the semester, beginning with a Contemporary performance that they will learn as a class. They will then work on a written responding task that looks at a dancework by Bangarra Dance Theatre. Finally, the classes will choreograph their own dances using the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout the semester.

Drama

Year 8 Drama with Mrs Bent and Mrs Trueman will continue developing the students’ understanding of the Elements of Drama. The girls will watch AYTP’s production of ‘April Aardvark’ and analyse a scene in their written responding task. Students will then bring stories to life with a storytelling unit in Term Two. Students will explore various scripted Australian Indigenous stories and Asian tales. They will also work with the Conventions of Storytelling. At the end of the Semester, they will present their polished group performances.

Music

Students in Year 8 Music will continue to develop their music-making skills in the semester-long unit, “Major Hits and Minor Moods.” They examine how “hit” tunes - drawn from a variety of time periods and styles - have utilised the elements of music to tell a story or create a mood. Students get to know a few major composers and artists, and will analyse the construction of a viral hit. They engage in listening and performing, and will also try their hand at writing their own melodies.

Mr Chris Davis

Curriculum Middle Leader - The Arts

ASSESSMENT CALENDAR

To access the Year 8 Assessment calendar [**CLICK HERE**](#)