



»» NEWSLETTER ««

SAINT MARK'S COPTIC ORTHODOX COLLEGE

Striving for Excellence



HEAD OF COLLEGE UPDATE

As we quickly speed to ending Term 3 and bidding adieu to another academic year shortly after, it was with mixed emotions that we came together in week 9 to celebrate and bid a heartfelt farewell to our Year 12 Graduating Class of 2023.

These at times cheeky, but nonetheless wonderful young men and women have spent years navigating the challenging journey of education called St Marks, growing not only in knowledge, but also in character and Faith. Their time at St. Marks Coptic Orthodox College has been marked by dedication, resilience, and the not to infrequent practical joke, but most importantly a growing relationship with their creator.

Our Year 12 students have been a mix of those who have excelled in academics, shown outstanding leadership, or compassion, and a commitment to making a positive impact on our school community. But in some way, they all have at times throughout their journey, been role models to their peers, demonstrating the values of respect, kindness, and determination that every St Marks student holds within them.

As they take their final steps within our school in the upcoming HSC exams, we are confident that the skills and values they have cultivated here, will serve as strong foundations for their future endeavours. As a St Marks family we are confident that each and every one of them, with all of their God given gifts and talents, cannot but help to make a mark on the new world they enter beyond school.

To our Year 12 Graduating Class of 2023, remember that this is not a goodbye but a 'see you later.' Our doors are always open, and your College family will remain a port of call in times of need. You will forever remain a cherished part of the St. Marks Coptic Orthodox College family, and many tears have and will continue to be shed with your absence.

On behalf of all the staff of St Marks Coptic Orthodox College we say farewell with pride and gratitude as we officially extend our warmest congratulations to each graduate and wish them success, happiness, and fulfillment in all their future endeavours. Continue to strive for excellence, and may your journey be filled with joy, purpose, and the knowledge that you have been well-prepared to face life's challenges, may your faith continue to be your guiding light in all that you do. Congratulations on your graduation!

God Bless

Anthony Deans
Head of College







O Lord, Bless the Crown of this Year with Your Goodness!

A WORD FROM OUR COLLEGE CHAPLAIN



St. Paul has set for us the way to witness: **“that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.”** Phil 2:15

From September 12 (Thout 1) to September 28, 2023 (Thout 17), the Coptic Orthodox Church celebrates the Feast of Nayrouz, which is the feast of the New Year in the Coptic Calendar, 1740 AM.

The designation “AM” at the end of the Coptic year refers to “Anno Martyrum,” which is Latin for “Year of the Martyrs.” While the Coptic Calendar is one of the oldest calendars in the world, going back to the ancient Egyptians in 4240 BC, the Copts adjusted their calendar to coincide with the beginning of the Roman Emperor Diocletian’s reign in 284 AD. Although the persecution of the Roman Emperor Diocletian (244 - 311 AD) was perhaps the most excessively brutal and widespread across the Eastern Roman Empire particularly in Egypt, his reign was considered a golden era in which the Church brought out the most sacred rank of saints, as many as three million martyrs, on whom the Church was, and is still, regenerated, nourished and flourished until this very day.

The word martyr μάρτυρος, in its original Greek, means witness. A martyr is one who brings a testimony, usually written or verbal. In particular, the testimony is that of the Christian Gospel. However, over time many Christian testimonies were rejected, and the witnesses put to death, and the word "martyr" developed its present sense. Where death arises, the witnesses follow the example of our Lord Jesus in offering up their lives as a sacrifice of love.

However, we are all called to witness for Christ. The Lord Christ repeatedly commanded us to witness for Him to every person and to all the nations (Matt 5:16, Matt 10:32). St. Anthony the Great wrote to his spiritual children, “Martyrdom is for us all”.

In order to be effective witnesses, we must have the knowledge of Christ, His salvation and be familiar enough with the Scripture to be able to accurately and coherently present the Gospel to others (1 Peter 3:15). However, the validity of our witness will be shown in how we practically live our lives; that is our true Christianity will be known by our actions, not merely by our profession. Through few words but accompanied by true Christian love, the light of Christ shines upon this dark, absurd and suffering world. There are enormous words were said about the beauty of Christ, yet not many Christians have effectively put on Christ and sincerely lived according to His teachings.

Fr George Nakhil
College Chaplain





PRIMARY CURRICULUM & BEYOND

Many wonderful and engaging activities occur at St. Mark's inside and outside the classroom.

Kindergarten has had the living egg program, and the students enjoyed writing about the experience during their literacy block.

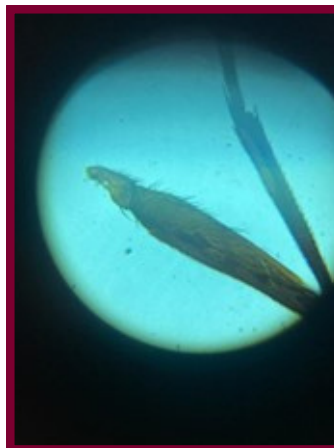


SCIENCE WEEK

We celebrated Science week by having an incredible science show presented by experts from Mad about Science. During the sessions, the students asked questions, made predictions and drew conclusions using scientific methods. They also had lots of fun!!!



The week extended to many Stem activities in the Primary classrooms and sealing the week with a wonderful SMC Science show. Thank you to Mr Salib for coordinating the Science week and organising the Science show.





St. Mark's Primary School's annual Science Week is a testament to their commitment to nurturing young minds and inspiring a lifelong passion for science. This week-long celebration of inquiry-based learning encourages students across various stages to explore, innovate, and collaboratively tackle real-world challenges.

During Science Week, students from different year stages present their inquiry-based projects, showcasing a wide range of scientific topics. For instance, in one corner, Year Stage 3 students proudly display their ingenious self-watering plant systems. These innovative creations were showcased within greenhouses thoughtfully crafted by their Year Stage 1 peers, demonstrating a collaborative and holistic approach to problem-solving.

Elsewhere, Year Stage 2 students delve into the world of renewable energy, unveiling solar-powered businesses powered by mini solar panels. These projects not only impart scientific knowledge but also promote the practical application of sustainability principles.

The culmination of Science Week takes place in the school's multi-purpose hall, where students confidently present their projects. These presentations not only highlight their scientific knowledge but also nurture essential skills like communication, teamwork, and critical thinking. It's a captivating showcase of youthful enthusiasm and innovation.

After the presentations, students have the unique opportunity to vote for the best projects. This not only encourages peer evaluation but also empowers students to play an active role in shaping their educational experiences. Top three per stage will be receiving prizes.

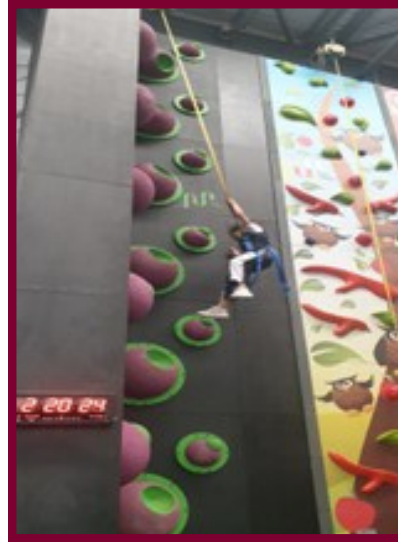
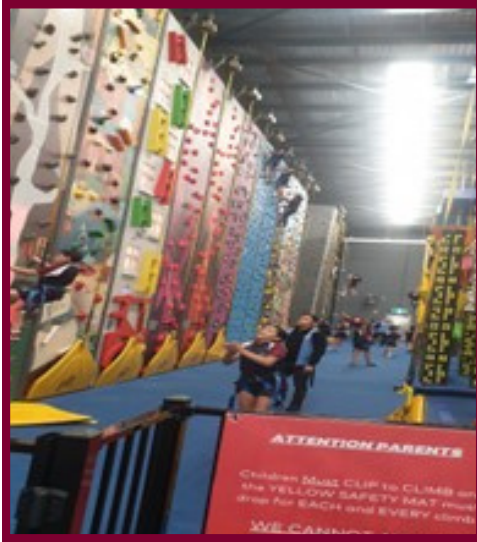
Science Week is more than just a week; it's a celebration of curiosity, creativity, and the boundless potential of young minds. As students continue to push boundaries and explore the frontiers of science, it's evident that the future of science education shines brightly at St. Mark's Primary School.





ACTIVITIES

The students who don't participate in competitive sports can partake in the rock-climbing program. This program has many benefits such as improving balance, helps with problem solving skills, it increases strength and grip and many more.



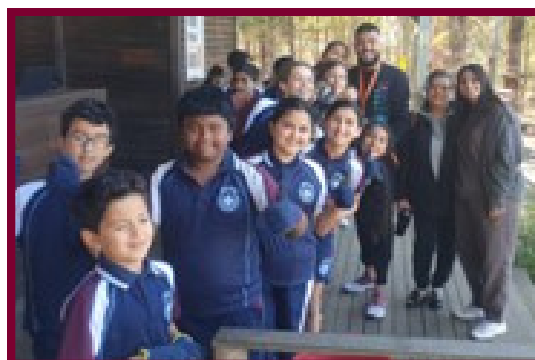
MORNING FITNESS FOR STUDENTS

Regular physical activity contributes to a child's physical development and promotes overall well-being. Research highlights the positive effects of exercise on children's physical, cognitive, and emotional wellness. Encourage your daughter to join us every Wednesday morning at 7:15 am. Thank you Mrs Takla for your time and effort.



YOUNG LEADERS DAY AT TREETOPS ADVENTURES

An exciting day in the trees. An excellent setting for boosting self-confidence and challenging one's own boundaries. Each student had the option between low, easy levels and high, heart-pounding challenges! This created several opportunities for the students to help one another through hard situations and build long-lasting trust.





COLLEGE ACTIVITIES & UPDATES

Father's Day

Dad, You're My Hero

While Fathers' Day is a celebration of fatherhood, it's a time for us to honor, celebrate and to be thankful for all of the men, father figures and male role models in our lives... including our uncles, grandfathers, Godfathers, and even our male teachers. We recognise the very important role you have in the lives of our children. Thank you to all of the dads at SMCC community. You are heroes!

Father's Day Stall was a success

Thank you to the mums that volunteered, along with the P&F members, who helped make the annual Fathers' Day stall such a success and special occasion for all primary students to purchase gifts for their dads. We are sure that the dads were delighted with their gifts. It was a delight to see the children take home their gift bags from school with such pride and excitement.

Father's Day Morning Tea

Father's Day at SMCC was a heartwarming and memorable occasion, filled with love, laughter, and cherished moments. We want to take a moment to share with you the highlights of our special day.

Primary students presented on stage for their fathers then Father George gave a beautiful talk. Dads and caregivers had the opportunity to take pics at the Photo booth (link below) to see all the pictures. Then dad's had a much needed breakfast while mingling with fellow dads.

HAPPY
FATHER'S
DAY

Special Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the Father Day stall and morning tea especially

Mr Deans, Mrs Nada, Father George, Teachers, P&F, Salt &

Light Catering and AllEventz Photobooth.

Photobooth photos

<https://alleventzphotobooth.fotoshare.co/e/od2lmiFYcjLusd5CVb2UK>





SECONDARY SCIENCE UPDATE

It has been a very exciting term for us in, in science. One of our greatest achievements this term was the success of our students in the Education Perfect Science Championship during National Science Week. For the first time ever, since we have been competing in this competition for a few years now, we received the first-place prize for a school of our size and overall, we received a seventh-place rank globally, out of the 1409 schools who competed in this competition. Furthermore 66 high school students received an award and some of these awards are for the top 1% of the state. We are so incredibly proud of our students and their achievement in science.



In other news, there have some exciting learning opportunities in year 8 who have been delving into the physics topic of energy and they are busily working on a STEM project to build a roller-coaster which demonstrates the various energy conversions and types of forces that they have studied. To assist in the application of their learning, many hands-on activities have been incorporated into the teaching program, to bring the science to life.

Meanwhile in Year 9, students have been studying the topic of "Sense and Control" and have been learning about the intricate anatomy and physiology on the human eye and ear, as well as the central nervous system, the peripheral nervous system, the brain and the endocrine system. These biology topics are often enjoyed by our students as this is where they get to perform some great dissections.





A WORD FROM THE LIBRARY

Reading at home with your child

Reading is a very important skill that you can share with your child at home. Children develop literacy skills through shared experiences, both at school and at home. Here are some things you can do to help your child with reading at home:

1 Reading out loud

Children need to hear the words they are saying to familiarise themselves with the sound of letters and words. It also helps them use expression, which makes their reading more fluent.



2 Choosing something to read

Make sure there is a wide range of reading materials for your child to read. Allow your child to choose what they would like to read. Books can be borrowed from the school or local libraries or given to them by the classroom teacher.

3 Reading in your home language

If your home language isn't English, read to your child in your home language. Studies have shown that this can help your child learn to read in English.

4 Read everyday

Make reading a fun activity that you and your child can enjoy together. If it is part of the routine, children are more likely to want to read. This can also be a screen-free bonding activity for you to share.

5 Talk about what you have read

When you are reading with your child, talk about what is happening. Ask your child what is happening, what they think will happen next, or their favourite part. You can also try asking 'what if' questions, such as 'What if the story was set in space?'

Reading doesn't have to be a chore, it can be something that the whole family enjoys. Reading is everywhere - street signs, recipe books, newspapers, and shopping catalogues just to name a few.

Remember, teachers are here to help you with your child's reading journey.



HSIE UPDATE

Across Years 7-12, classes have been going well in HSIE. It is pivotal moment of the Term as most students are engaged in completing their assessments for this Term.

Year 11 have just completed their Semester Two Examination and will be completing the last Preliminary units before commencing their HSC Course.

HISTORY WEEK



During Week 8, St Mark's celebrated History Week with a series of activities throughout the week. This year's theme was 'Voices from the Past'. This was an opportunity to engage with the histories of those who were influential but also many who may have been voiceless in the past. There were daily History Trivia in Roll Call and activities during every lunch break such as guessing famous faces from History, an activity showcasing crime and punishment, as well as a version of Caber Tossing, a game practiced in Scotland!

Some famous speeches were broadcast over the speakers through the week such as Martin Luther King Jr's 'I have a dream' and one of Winston Churchill's speeches during WWII. Some of the staff stepped back in time and got in character as some personalities in the past.

Jaime Jacob
Head of HSIE

LEARNING SUPPORT

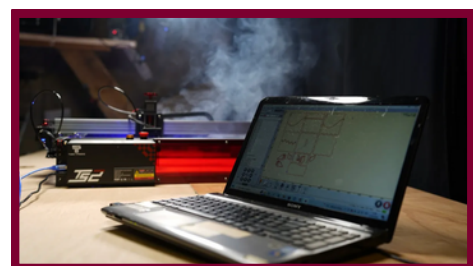


SMC is blessed to have had a dedicated and hardworking Support Team helping our Junior Students achieve their goals for many years now. This year, our principal, Mr Anthony Deans has also recognised the need for Support teachers to assist our Senior Students and now, they too are blessed to have a dedicated team! We would like to celebrate this decision by recognizing a student who, with the combined guidance of his Math teacher and Support teacher, has achieved phenomenal growth in Mathematics, receiving his best result so far. Well done for your unwavering commitment to your learning Savo!

STEM



"Exciting news for SMC! We are moments away from receiving our 3D Printers and laser engravers to bring new technology and horizons. These professional-grade 3D printers will bring ideas to life, from prototypes to intricate models accompanied by a laser engraver that will provide precision and personal touch. Stay tuned for future student (and staff) creations!"





LEGO LEAGUE

First LEGO League: A Team of Innovation and Collaboration

In preparation for the upcoming First LEGO League competition in November, a remarkable team of ten students at St. Mark's is proving their mettle. This group of young minds isn't just good; they're exceptionally collaborative and highly engaged in their pursuit of excellence.

These students, with their diverse roles as engineers, builders, and coders, showcase the beauty of teamwork. They seamlessly combine their unique skills to design, construct, and program their LEGO robot for the competition's challenging missions. Their synergy is a testament to the strength of collaboration in achieving great results.

The team's engagement and passion shine through as they tackle the real-world problem-solving component of the competition. They've not only identified a pressing issue but have also developed innovative solutions that demonstrate their dedication to making a difference.

As they hone their skills and build character through this journey, these students are not just competing; they are paving the way for a future where innovation and collaboration are at the forefront. The First LEGO League is not merely a competition; it's a platform for these young innovators to shine and inspire others to do the same. Come November, they'll undoubtedly leave a mark with their impressive skills and unwavering commitment.





COLLEGE REMINDERS



Student Printing

Self-service printing, copying and scanning are now available to our Years 7-12 students at the School Library using their ID cards.



Most Dangerous Social Media Apps Kids Should Not Use

When we say dangerous, worst or unsafe social media apps, we don't mean that the app itself is dangerous. What we mean is the abuse of these apps by people with hidden, deadly motives.

Let's take a look at some of the popular social media apps regularly abused by cyber villains.



Snapchat

Doesn't need any introduction at all. After all, it has millions of users from around the globe. However, the popular "bubble messaging" app does have its fair share of privacy and security issues that put many users' privacy at risk.



Ask.fm

Allows users to ask any question they want either as an anonymous user or as themselves. However, some people tend to make inappropriate use of the app's anonymity feature by asking vulgar questions and even leave offensive comments. Some even start bullying other users by making derogatory remarks.



TikTok

Is one of the most popular video-sharing apps with around 500 million active users worldwide. While thirteen is the minimum age required to use the app, anyone can download it as there's no proper way to verify age. Another concern for parents is the inappropriate language used in some videos, which isn't suitable for kids.



Omegle

Is a video chatting application that allows two parties to indulge in a video chat while being anonymous. The user is addressed as "You" while the other person is addressed as "Stranger." The app has garnered the attention of many critics who deem the application as a perfect spot for predators who are after unsuspecting kids.

Finally, The apps listed above and many more cannot be blamed in any way for how they are used, after all, a user needs to be smarter than an app. Please to talk to your kids and educate them about online safety.



COLLEGE REMINDERS

General school uniform

- All students are reminded that they should be dressed in the Winter uniform this term and Term 3.
- Boys ties are to be worn with the school uniform at all times at an appropriate length. All ties must be straight and neat.
- Shirts and blouses are to be tucked in at all times, with top button fastened.
- Skirt, dress and tunic length must be on the knee.

Blazers

- Blazers need to be worn to and from school. Blazers are compulsory throughout the school year. They are to be worn to and from school, during Chapel, to school events, excursions, school photographs and when representing the school.
- Layering Blazers are to be the outer garment, jumpers, cardigans and vests can be worn underneath. On extremely hot days, an exemption may be given to remove blazers. A decision will be made by the Deputy Head of College and students will be advised by their teachers.
- Badges The School Badge and House Badge are worn on the left side of the blazer collar. Other School Merit Badges are also permitted to be worn on the blazers.
- Care and maintenance Blazers are to be kept clean, tidy, and have no missing buttons. Blazers are to be dry cleaned and repaired at the end of each term.

Mobile Phones

- Students are NOT permitted to have mobile phones in their possession during the School hours of 8:25am – 3:10pm.
- They are to hand their phone into the front office for safe keeping each morning and collect it at the end of the day.
- Students with lockers may keep their mobile in their locker for safe keeping whilst on school grounds.
- If an issue were to arise throughout the day parents will be contacted via the College Office and the same channel of communication will be used if parents wish to inform their child of any urgent issues.

For Boys - Hair Update

Boys must have NEAT and blended hairstyles that are cut short to one length. It should not extend below the eyebrows or touch the shirt collar. Undercuts, steps, razored part lines or patterns, top knots, shaved sides, flat tops and spiked hair are not permitted. The hair must be no shorter than a **Blade 1**. Boys are expected to be clean-shaven and their sideburns short. No Skin fades, No Mullets and No side tapers.



For Girls - Hair & Nails

Girls must keep their hair off their faces and shoulders, regardless of the length of their hair. Hair must be completely and securely tied back including long fringes and strips of hair. Braids and half up/half down hairstyles are not permitted. Hair extensions or colored hair is strictly not allowed. Makeup, false nails, nail polish and fake lashes are not permitted. Nails are to be kept short and neat. Shirt length must be below the knee cap and girls must wear black or navy stockings.

Borrowing a Chromebook

In case of an emergency; St Mark's Library now has a number of Chromebooks that are available for students to borrow for the day. Students take full responsibility for the device.

Study Sessions

Study sessions are now available every Tuesday during recess and Wednesday during lunch in E4. Our senior students are offering mentoring and support during this assessment period.

As always, we expect our students to show respect and consideration towards their teachers, peers and the school environment. This includes **arriving on time** and prepared for class, **participating** in all activities, **completing homework** and following the school rules.

Primary Curriculum

New English and Mathematics syllabuses is now released. New syllabuses focused on what is essential to know and do in early and middle years of schooling, and key learning areas in the senior years.

Jewellery

As a general rule Jewellery may not be worn to College or to College events. Necklaces, bracelets of any material including rubber or string, anklets and rings may not be worn at any time with the College uniform due to safety reasons. Wristwatches are to be discreet (no smart watches permitted); Girls are permitted to wear a single gold or silver sleeper or stud in the lower ear lobe only; Gemstones are not permitted. A small Coptic cross may be worn around the neck.



COLLEGE VALUES, VISION & STRATEGY

BOARD UPDATE

Through God's grace and collaboration with all the staff, executives and parent representatives, we achieved a successful co-design of a College vision, values and strategy:

OUR COLLEGE VISION

To enrich our children with Christian teachings founded upon the Coptic Orthodox faith, becoming value-driven Australian citizens, connected as one body with unique gifts.

OUR COLLEGE VALUES

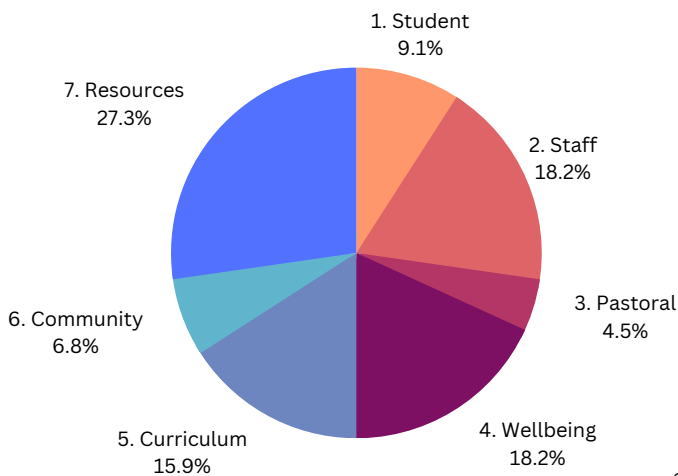


OUR COLLEGE STRATEGIC PILLARS

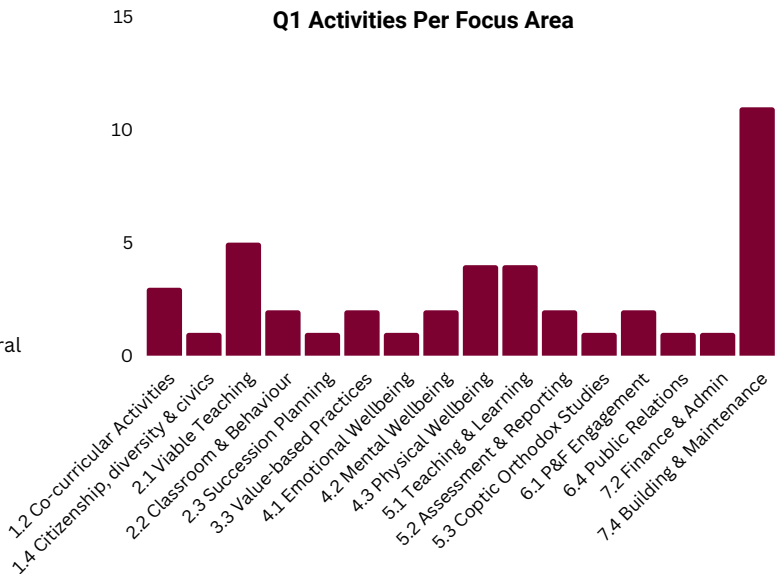
STUDENTS 	STAFF 	PASTORAL 	WELLBEING 	CURRICULUM 	COMMUNITY 	RESOURCES
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After six months of co-designing the strategy, which can be found on the College website, it is now being implemented and reports are generated on a quarterly basis to ensure progress towards the pursuit of excellence. Below is an example of how Quarter 1 activities have been captured and evaluated based on the strategic pillars and focus areas.

Q1 Activities Per Strategic Pillar



Q1 Activities Per Focus Area



In the next quarter, we are looking to understand more of the staff and parent priorities and look forward to a prosperous year ahead as we unite towards a common vision and work collaboratively for the betterment of our College and the growth of our students.



COLLEGE STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

STUDENTS



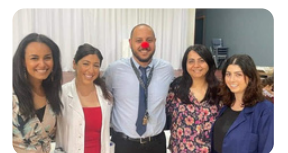
Increase in co-curricular activities and achievements including; swimming, debating, netball, and addition of Choir and Drama.



STAFF



Staff have more collaborative spaces. Professional Development is underway. New behaviour policy in place for optimum teaching and learning.



PASTORAL



New Chapel built on the Premises with weekly Thursday masses for families. Weekly lunchtime Bible study with Fr George.



WELLBEING



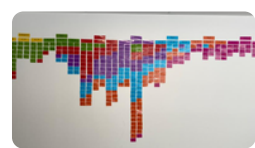
New canteen truck available for students with healthy options. Onsite Counsellor is available for all students. New gym with fitness program.



CURRICULUM



New STEM Curriculum. Collaborations with Industry partners for practical learning. New learning & assessment approaches for Junior College.



COMMUNITY



Increased P&F engagement & events. Increased sporting collaborations with sister Colleges. Increased local community engagements.



RESOURCES



Opening of two new buildings in 2023. More open, modern spaces for increased collaboration. New security system put in place including cameras. New laptops for all staff.





PHOTOS, IMPORTANT DATES & COLLEGE CONTACTS



SMC Year 12 QLD Trip ✈️👏





Important Dates

2023 Term 4

- **10 October** | Lessons commence KDG to Year 11 (Summer uniform required)
- **11 October** | HSC Exams Commence
- **2 November** | Year 3-6 Inquisitive Minds
- **13 November** | Year 3 & 4 Camp
- **13, 15, 16 November** | Year 10 Min Stds & All my own work workshop
- **16 November** | Year 6 Graduation
- **20 November** | Stage 1 Presentation Assembly
- **21 November** | Kindergarten Graduation
- **23 November** | Year 12 Graduation Dinner
- **24 November** | Year 7 2024 Orientation Day
- **27 November** | Year 3-6 Presentation Assembly
- **29 November** | Stage 3 Camp
- **1 December** | Carols By Candlelight
- **6 December** | Lessons Conclude KDG to Year 11



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