

NEWSLETTER

Week 1 Term 1 – 27/01/2021

Welcome

Welcome back to St Thomas Aquinas for 2021. The staff are looking forward to the students returning to school and hearing about their holiday experiences.

A warm welcome also to our new staff Tania Geracitano (Assistant Principal), James West (Year 6 teacher) and Susannah Sinclair (Diversity Teacher). Thank you to our wonderful teaching staff who have prepared for the school year during the school holidays to ensure that the students had a successful start to the new year.

2021 Mathematical Assessment Interviews

Thank you to the parents for your assistance with the Mathematical Assessment Interviews held on our Staff Development Days in Week 1.

COVID-19 Restrictions - Parents and Carers

Below please find the updated COVID-19 restrictions for parents and carers provided by NSW Catholic Schools and NSW Health.

“Non-essential” adults are not permitted on school grounds or at school events. Parents and carers are permitted to enter a school site for the following reasons:

- Purchase or pick up uniform items
- Drop off students for Kindergarten and Years 1, 2 to support settling students into a new school environment on the first day of the school year.

Square Metre Restriction and Physical Distancing

Over the Christmas/New Year period, the [square metre rule](#) was amended by NSW health authorities *from one person per 2 square metres, to one person per 4 square metres*. This applies to all workplaces. Please remember that 1.5m physical distancing remains unchanged. Staff and adults are expected to follow these guidelines at all times including within the school, at school events and at drop off/pick up.

Our staff are excited to see the students return to school and aim to make it a smooth transition for each child and their families. Staff will be available to welcome families and assist in the transition back to school.

Kindergarten - Day 1 (Tuesday 2 February): Kindergarten parents are welcome to walk with your child directly to the Kindergarten classroom at 9 am on Tuesday 2 February 2021 (as per recent email).

Year 1, Year 2 and New Students in Years 1-6 (Friday 29 January): Parents of Year 1, Year 2 and new students in Years 1-6 are welcome to walk their child to the COLA area before school on their first day back, if needed but asked not to stay too long in the area.

Students Years 3 – 6: All other families are asked to remain in the staff car park area.

Communication with Teachers

St Thomas Aquinas recognises that email is a fast and convenient way to communicate with your child’s teacher. As you can appreciate, teachers read their emails at various times throughout the school day. Further, to that other than in the case of a genuine emergency, they are generally not expected to respond to emails from parents and students outside of normal working hours. Please keep in mind that if you send an email to a member of our staff outside of normal working hours, a reply may not be received until the following working day. If you wish to contact your child’s teacher, please continue to direct your emails stthomas@parra.catholic.edu.au which will then be passed onto the relevant teacher, as per our usual practice. Some teachers may elect for you to email them directly and they will provide you with their email details.

Staying in the Loop

SkoolBag

This year we will continue to use the **SkoolBag** as our main form of communication. SkoolBag allows us to notify families directly through the app. School news, excursion notes, information about upcoming events and general reminders will be communicated directly to families via SkoolBag. If you have not downloaded our SkoolBag app we strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible. Please also ensure that you sign up to the grade or grades that your children are part of this year. This can be done within the app and allows us to personalise the information that we send out as throughout the year some messages will only need to be sent to particular grades. How to Install SkoolBag For iPhone and iPad users: Go to the Apple App Store, search for “SkoolBag” and download the free SkoolBag app. After opening the app, add your school(s) and you’re ready to go! For Google Android Users: Go to the Google Play Store, search for “SkoolBag” and download the free SkoolBag app. After opening the app, add your school(s) and you’re ready to go! Facebook We will continue to use our St Thomas Aquinas

St Thomas Aquinas Celebrates Facebook Page and School Website to share and celebrate the great learning and achievements with our school community. Go to <https://m.facebook.com> and follow the prompts to log in or create a new account. Search for the St Thomas Aquinas Celebrates page, then like and share our page.

My School Lunch Box

Our school **does not** have a canteen, however families can order healthy, fresh lunches in a convenient way online through <http://www.myschoollunchbox.com.au>

Car Park Safety

Parents are reminded NOT to park in the staff car park at any time.

Sports Uniforms

As communicated earlier we have introduced a new sports uniform to our school. We ask that all students are wearing the new sports uniform by the commencement of 2022, giving all families 12 months to transition to the new uniform.

Students are asked not to mix the summer uniform with the sports uniform. Therefore the sports jacket is only to be worn on sports days.

Expectations

At St Thomas Aquinas we expect that all students wear the correct uniform with pride and follow our school uniform and grooming agreements. We are extremely pleased that the majority of our students wear the correct uniform each day. **However, we have noticed some students continue to have unusual styles of haircuts, coloured hair, excessive jewellery, various coloured socks and nail polish.**

We ask that all families **read the school Uniform and Grooming policy (attached)** and reinforce these expectations with their children. We understand and appreciate that some families are organising to purchase new items from The School Locker. If a student is unable to wear an element of the correct school uniform a note from the parent indicating the reason needs to be presented to the teacher.

Sports Days - will be communicated by the end of this week.

All students are asked to wear their full summer uniform on Friday 29 January 2021.

School Uniform (The School Locker)

A reminder that The School Locker has moved our stock to a warehouse in Wetherill Park. The new location is a warehouse only and not a retail store, therefore **our stock will no longer be available at Liverpool**. We have been assured the new location will provide a better online service and faster shipping for our families.

The school now holds a full sizing set of all uniform items for families to try on then purchase online. We hope this will be more convenient for families having stock at school. Please contact the school office to make an appointment.

The new STA school bag is now available for purchase online. We currently have a limited number of bags at the school office, which will only be available until stock runs out, then all future purchases must be made online. Please pay for your bag on the QKR! App before collecting from the office.

QKR! App

It's time to install the QKR! App; our **new payment platform** for all ad-hoc items for purchase. This app now replaces all cash payments and parents are able to order hats and pay for Clothing Pool items. Once you have made a purchase for a hat, the school is notified immediately, and we will then deliver the hat to the student for their recess or lunchtime play. The app is free, and your profile is confidential.



masterpass

To install →: Go to the **Google play store or Apple App store** to download for Android or iPhone, register your country of residence as Australia, search for our school by name (will appear in nearby locations if within 10km of STA), register your child's details then you are ready to make purchases and payments.

Please note:

- **Payments for school fees cannot be made on QKR!** Current arrangements for school fees have not changed.
- We cannot refund on the QKR! App. Please **email the school with any Clothing Pool orders before processing** payments, so that we can check that the items are in stock.

If you require any assistance, please contact Cheree Brown, our Finance Secretary.



COSHC

Our COSHC centre operates within the safety and convenience of school premises for children in Years K-6. Various activities are available for the children ranging from craft, games, puzzles, cooking, dramatic play, construction and outdoor play. As a recreationally based environment we are focused on offering the children the all-important balance they need with fun and positive social interaction! **Operating Hours – Monday to Friday:** 6:30am to 8:45am and 2:30pm to 6:30pm. **Enquiries: email - coshcstthomasspringwood@parra.catholic.edu.au or phone Kelly Travers on 0400 253 528.** All COSHC services abide by the policies and procedures of Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta.

School Opal Card – Application Information

A new or updated application for school travel passes is only needed when a student is: **applying for** a school travel pass for the first time; **requesting an additional pass** as a result of a new shared parental responsibility situation (eg joint custody); **changing school** or campus; **changing home address**; receiving an **expiry** notification; **repeating** a school year; **changing their name** or requesting a **new transport operator**. This means students who are progressing to Year 3 and Year 7 only need to reapply if they are changing circumstances. To apply or update your child's details visit www.transportnsw.info/school-students. If you don't have access to the internet **phone 131 500** for assistance.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

2021 TERM 1	Week 1	Wednesday 27 January	STAFF ONLY COMMENCE – No classes Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Years K-6
		Thursday 28 January	No classes Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Years K-6
		Friday 29 January	Year 1-6 Students Commence Term 1 Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Kindergarten
	Week 2	Monday 01 February	Mathematical Assessment Interviews (MAI) for Kindergarten
		Tuesday 02 February	Kindergarten Commence Term 1 (Full days)

**** See Uniform & Grooming information over page.**

UNIFORM & GROOMING

School Uniform

Our school uniform makes an unambiguous statement of who we are and what we stand for as a school. At St Thomas Aquinas we expect our students to wear their uniforms correctly at all times. We believe that by encouraging students to take pride in themselves and their appearance we are promoting school spirit, self-esteem and a sense of belonging to our school community. Our expectations are that:

- Students wear the correct school uniform every day.
- Black leather shoes are worn on non-sport days and polished regularly.
- Shirts are tucked in at all times (except when at sport or at play).
- **School hats** are worn each day whilst outdoors and all year round – *(this is in keeping with the school's Sun Safety Procedures)*.
- **Summer uniforms** are worn in Terms 1 and 4.
- **Winter uniforms** are worn in Terms 2 and 3.
- **School fleecy jacket (optional)** can be purchased from the uniform supplier and may be worn with all uniforms.
- **Sports uniform items (including sports jackets)** are worn **only on designated sports days** and **not** with the regular uniform.
- In winter any extra jackets should be in school colours.
- **Polo shirts, jackets and 'hoodies'** acquired through CEDP sporting events may **only** be worn when representing the school at Diocesan sports events or on designated mufti days.

We ask that parents reinforce these expectations with their children when they leave home for school.

All articles of clothing and belongings must be clearly marked with your child's name.

Lapses in Wearing Correct Uniform

If a student is unable to wear an element of the correct school uniform a note from the parent indicating the reason needs to be presented to the teacher. Such lapses from the correct uniform must only be temporary.

Hair and Grooming

Students should wear neat and tidy hair styles to complement our school uniform. Hair is to be kept off the collar or tied back securely. No hair should be in the way of the eyes. Hair is not to be coloured or tinted. Unusual styles or cuts are **not** allowed. These guidelines apply both to girls and boys and may assist in preventing the spread of head lice. Ribbons, scrunchies, hair slides etc. if worn, should be in the St Thomas Aquinas uniform colours of dark and/or light blue.

Students who consistently lapse in wearing the correct uniform and following the grooming policy will be referred to the Assistant Principal and a note sent home.

Jewellery & Accessories

Apart from one pair of sleepers or small plain studs and wristwatch, excessive jewellery is not permitted, for safety reasons. A chain with a cross or religious medallion may be worn under shirt or dress lines. Nails should be unvarnished, kept clean and neatly trimmed. No makeup is to be worn. No leather or bead necklaces are to be worn.