



St Gerard's Catholic Primary School Carlingford

Parent Handbook

October 2011

Growing in Wisdom and Faith



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FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Dear Parents,

Welcome to the St Gerard's Catholic Primary School community. I hope that your association and involvement with the school will be a happy and fruitful one.

St Gerard's is a faith community and as such promotes a Christ-centred education. We do this in partnership with parents and parish. Our focus is inspired by our school motto, "*Growing in Wisdom and Faith.*" This motto comes from our valued Mercy tradition, which calls students, teachers and our community to embrace the values of: compassionate service, respect for others and the land and to act with the spirit of Christian hospitality.

A strong sense of partnership is evident in our school community by the high level of parent involvement and the great spirit of hospitality shown by children, staff and parents.

At St Gerard's we all work together to achieve quality learning within a positive school environment, which we believe, is essential for a successful education.

Thank you for sharing these formative years in your child's life with us and we look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Mrs Ann Milling
Principal

OUR SCHOOL MISSION

At St Gerard's Catholic Primary School we honour the traditions of our founders, the Sisters of Mercy and work to perpetuate their values of:

JUSTICE, RESPONSIBILITY and RESPECT.

Mission

United in Baptism

Journeying in faith and learning

We form a vibrant and pastoral community

Valuing the Individual

Challenging all learners

Making a positive difference in the world.



SCHOOL INFORMATION

NAME OF SCHOOL:	St Gerard's Catholic Primary School
ADDRESS:	543 North Rocks Road Carlingford NSW 2118
PHONE:	(02) 9871 1633
FAX:	(02) 9872 4871
PRINCIPAL:	Mrs Ann Milling
EMAIL:	sgc@dbb.catholic.edu.au
WEBSITE:	www.sgcdbb.catholic.edu.au
SCHOOL OFFICE HOURS:	8am – 4pm (Mon – Wed) 8am – 3:30pm (Thurs – Fri)
SPORT COLOUR HOUSES	MacKillop - Blue Majella - Red Darug - Gold Mercy - Green

St Gerard's is a Catholic co-educational primary school located in the leafy suburb of Carlingford. It is a parish school and belongs to the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford. The school is one of a broader group of 43 schools in the Diocese of Broken Bay. The structure of St Gerard's school is two streams, which means that there are two classes of each grade, making a total of fourteen classes in all. The average class size is in the mid-twenties.

We are proud of the strong partnership that exists between parents and school. The school is well respected in the local area as a school of quality learning, committed teachers and welcoming parents. Our school has beautiful grounds and access to a large grassy oval immediately behind the school. Our students continue their education in local secondary schools such as: St Leo's Catholic College - Wahroonga (co-ed), Mount St Benedict College - Pennant Hills (girls), Loreto Normanhurst (girls), Marist College Eastwood (boys), St Patrick's Marist College - Dundas (co-ed) and Oakhill College - Castle Hill and our students have earned a fine reputation for leadership and being well prepared for secondary studies.

PARISH INFORMATION

St Gerard's Catholic Primary School belongs to the Catholic Parish of Epping and Carlingford. Contact details for Carlingford Parish Office are:

Phone:	9871 1328
Fax:	9872 3230
Web:	www.eppcarl.org.au
Email:	Carlingford@eppcarl.org.au

OUR SCHOOL DAY

SCHOOL HOURS:	8.50 a.m. – 3.05 p.m. Playground supervised from 8.25 a.m.
MORNING BELL:	8.50 a.m.
RECESS:	11.00 a.m. - 11.20 a.m.
LUNCH:	12.45 p.m. – 1.45 p.m.
DISMISSAL:	3.05 p.m.

SUPERVISION

Children are supervised closely during the school day. Morning supervision commences at 8.25 a.m. and we encourage you to send your child after this time. There is no supervision provided on the playground until 8.25 a.m. Children who arrive early to school need to sit in the shelter shed quietly and wait for the duty teacher.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

Please notify the school in writing if there is a change of address, phone numbers and/or email addresses. This is particularly important for medical emergencies. It is important to let the school know of anything which affects the child, for example, health problems, change in family circumstances, etc.



OUR SCHOOL UNIFORM

All children at St Gerard's are proud of their uniform and are encouraged to take pride in their presentation by wearing correct school uniform. All items are currently available from our Uniform Shop. The Uniform Shop is located in the room next to the canteen in the shelter shed area and is open fortnightly; a roster is located on the notice board outside the shop.

Order forms are available through the school office or on the website. You can email your order to stguniform@sgcdbb.catholic.edu.au.

Dress

Always tidy, shoes cleaned at least once weekly, ties on properly, shirts tucked in. Black school shoes for our everyday uniform and joggers for sports day.

Hair

Girls - Long hair should be tied back. Hair accessories must be in the school colours – maroon & blue, available from the Uniform Shop

Boys - Neat, long hair to be tied back.

Jewellery

No nail polish, bracelets, rings, necklaces or jewellery of any kind. (Studs only for ears).

Hats

The School has a "No Hat Play in the Shade" Sun Protection policy; all children must wear a St Gerard's hat for outdoor play and sports lessons.



OUR SCHOOL UNIFORM

Girls' Uniform	Boys' Uniform
<p>Summer Light blue check dress with front and back pleats, action back and maroon piping on collar and sleeves and attached tab tie White ankle socks and black school shoes</p>	<p>Summer Sky blue short sleeve shirt Grey shorts Grey ankle socks and black school shoes</p>
<p>Winter Pale blue shirt with Peter Pan collar Navy check school tunic with front and back pleats and removable navy check tab tie Navy blue long socks or stockings and black school shoes</p>	<p>Winter Sky blue long sleeve shirt Grey trousers Navy check school tie Grey ankle socks and black shoes</p>

Sports Uniform (girls and boys)

- Pale blue polo shirt with school crest
- Colour polo shirt with house name
- Maroon rugby knit shorts or skort with school name
- White ankle socks and white joggers
- Navy zip jacket with school crest
- Navy trackpants (optional for winter)

General Items (girls and boys all year)

- Maroon knitted school jumper with stripes on neck and cuffs
- Maroon bush hat or legionnaire hat with school crest
- Maroon backpack with school crest
- Blue library bag with school crest
- Navy or maroon hair accessories and house colours as appropriate
- Colour house wrist bands and swimming caps are also available

All children wear Sports Uniform with their colour house shirt on Friday's.

OUR SCHOOL DAY – GETTING TO SCHOOL

DROPPING OFF AND PICKING UP CHILDREN BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL

Parking is available in the Council carpark located at the rear of the school, entrance off Roselea Way. Limited parking is also available on North Rocks Road. N.B. Cars are not permitted to park in the bus stops on North Rocks Road but can drop off in the marked 'Drop Off Zone.' It is advisable to walk your child into school, particularly if dropping off from Roselea Way; use the paths provided.

At the conclusion of the school day all children are directed to their designated meeting / pick up area by their class teacher. Children wait in the designated area to be collected by parent/s, guardians or carers. Students who are being picked up on North Rocks Road walk up the pedestrian footpath with the supervising teacher and wait with the teacher to be collected by their parents. If there is any delay in parents collecting their children after school, the children will be sent to sit in the school office. It is not appropriate for children to be left waiting alone after school. Parents are to contact the school if they are delayed. Our supervision aims to maximise child safety and care.

Children are not allowed on the play equipment unless supervised by an adult. The play equipment at this time is not supervised by school teachers.

WALKERS

Pedestrians – Safety is Paramount

Children walking to school must do so with parental consent. Children who walk to and from the school are to enter and exit the school using the pedestrian paths provided. Parents are asked to be aware of the age appropriateness in directing children walking to and from school, without adult supervision. It is important that no child or parent walk through the Parish carpark.

WET WEATHER PROCEDURES

Students being collected by parents wait in designated areas or in classrooms on wet weather days. Child safety and care is our priority. We encourage children to be prepared for wet weather by having a raincoat (labelled with their name) in their bag at all times.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Children from St. Gerard's School may attend Roselea Before and After School Care on the grounds of Roselea Public School. The children walk supervised from Roselea Public School and arrive at school at 8:30a.m. and meet at a designated meeting point in the school grounds after school and walk supervised to After School Care. Parents need to deal with the centre directly. The school does not make or cancel bookings.

Contact details of the centre are:

Roselea Student Care Centre

Phone: 9872 6529

Email: rsccl@bigpond.com.au



BUS SERVICE

Sydney buses provide the children with transport to and from the school – Carlingford, Epping, West Pennant Hills and North Rocks. Forms may be obtained from the school office. All children from Kinder to Year 2 are eligible for free travel. Children - Years 3 to 6 - are entitled to a bus pass if they live outside a certain area (approximately 2km from the school). For further information, please contact Sydney Buses on 131500 or visit their website <http://www.cdcbus.com.au>. There are two teachers on duty each afternoon to supervise children catching buses home. Children who catch a bus are assembled and when the bus arrives they are then escorted to the bus.

PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality is important for the children to settle at school and be welcomed. All children need to be at school for the beginning of the school day at 8.50am. Late arrivals must report to the school office to be signed in. A Late note is to be completed and handed in at the Office. The Office will pass the note on to the classroom teacher and is a record of late attendance.

If your child needs to leave school early please send in a note to let the teacher know of the date and time of this occurrence. When picking up your child please report to the school office. The office will contact your child's class teacher and organise for your child to meet you at the office. This way there is minimal disruption to the class activities.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Whilst parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning activities at school, it is important that they follow school procedures.

If you have kindly volunteered to help out at the school for any activity e.g. reading, canteen, library, please report to the school office on arrival, sign in and take a badge to wear. On your way out please return the badge and sign out. This enables us to keep track of all visitors to the school parents, professionals and tradespeople.

VOLUNTEER DECLARATIONS

All parents who interact with the children at school or for any school related activity e.g.. excursions, sporting events etc., must sign a NSW Working with Children Check - Volunteer Declaration.



OUR SCHOOL DAY – THE DAY BEGINS

ASSEMBLIES

Every Monday morning at the start of the day there is a longer assembly at St Gerard's (10 – 15 mins) . This is a great way to begin the week. At this assembly we spend a short time in prayer, recognise student learning achievements with Curriculum and Honour Awards, celebrate birthdays and sing the National Anthem. At this assembly there is also an overview of significant events in the week so this is often a handy assembly for parents to attend after drop off (if you can) so that you are up to date with the latest news.

Class assemblies are usually held fortnightly in the School/Parish Hall. Parents are always welcome.

LIBRARY

The children are encouraged to borrow books from the school library but they must have a library bag. Bags can be purchased through the school Uniform Shop. During the first week of school a note will be sent home to tell you of the allocated library day for your child's class. On this day your child needs to bring their library bag and any returning books from the previous week.

RECESS & LUNCH

At recess and lunchtime the children eat their food in allocated areas. There are separate playgrounds for infants and primary students. Children unable to eat their lunch are encouraged to take it home to show mum or dad. Please note that at St Gerard's we encourage children not to share food in consideration of children with allergies

SCHOOL CANTEEN

Our school canteen operates on Monday and Thursday for hot and cold lunches only and all days for healthy snacks / iceblocks at lunch time,. We strive to promote healthy eating habits and provide a service to our parent community. A canteen menu and roster is found on the notice board outside the canteen or at the school office. Each term a revised price list and meal deals are circulated in the school newsletter. The canteen relies on the support of volunteer parents. At the end of each term a call will go out for helpers. Please consider offering your time as it is a wonderful way to get to know the school and other parents. Your children will love seeing Mum and Dad at the canteen too. Toddlers welcome with adult on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays only. Toddlers are not able to be in the Canteen on lunch preparation days due to OH&S requirements.

LOST PROPERTY

Your child's name should be sewn on or marked on all possessions particularly all parts of school uniform. Raincoats can be labelled with a permanent marker. Drink bottles, lunch boxes, school bags, even shoes and joggers should be labelled to prevent loss and possible upset. Parents and children are most welcome to look for lost articles in the lost property basket located outside of Year 5B classroom. This will be cleared at the end of each term.

EXCURSIONS

These are planned as integral parts of the children's learning and are not social outings. Children are expected to attend them. The cost for excursions is included in the School Based Resource Fee. The annual Year 6 School Excursion to Canberra and Year 6 Leadership Camp are billed separately to families. The teachers will often call for parent assistance on excursions; we encourage you to get involved and help out where possible. Parents must have signed a NSW Working with Children Check - Volunteer Declaration form in order to be considered as a helper.

OUR SCHOOL DAY – ABSENCES & ILLNESS

WHEN MAY MY CHILD BE AWAY FROM SCHOOL?

The Catholic Schools Office accepts the following reasons for a child being absent from school:

- that the child is too sick to leave the house
- that the child has an infectious disease like chicken pox, mumps, measles, head lice, etc.
- that the child is incapacitated by injury preventing movement around the school, religious commitment or family annual holiday or other special leave, in consultation with the classroom teacher and Principal
- dental and doctors appointments should be made after school

MEDICATION

Occasionally it is necessary for a child to bring medication to school. Medication should be administered by a parent. Should you require the school to administer medication you must approach the school office and complete the authority forms explaining reason and dosage, etc.

ACCIDENTS & INJURIES

Children occasionally have minor injuries from their play. All staff are well prepared for first aid and emergency care. In emergency situations, family emergency numbers will be contacted and emergency measures taken by the Principal or Assistant Principal. Any serious accidents or injuries are immediately treated and parents are contacted.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of changes to home/work/emergency contact phone numbers.

SICKNESS

If a child is feeling unwell, the teacher will contact the School Office to inform the Secretary that the child is being brought to the Sick Bay. If the child needs to be sent home administration staff will then contact a parent and make the necessary arrangements.

A child who is not well cannot concentrate on schoolwork. If your child is unwell, please keep him/her at home until he or she is ready to come back to school. Some common childhood diseases, which will keep them at home are:

CHICKEN POX:	Excluded for at least 5 days AND until all blisters have dried.
CONJUNCTIVITIS:	Excluded until discharge from eyes has ceased.
GERMAN MEASLES:	Excluded until fully recovered or at least 4 days after the onset of rash.
HEADLICE:	Excluded until hair is completely clear of nits or lice.
HEPATITIS:	Re-admitted to school with a medical certificate.
IMPETIGO:	Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced. Sores on exposed surfaces must be covered with a watertight dressing.
MEASLES:	Excluded for at least 4 days from appearance of rash.
RINGWORM:	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced.

Students enrolling at St Gerard's must provide a Certificate of Immunisation. The Certificate of Immunisation is required at the time of enrolment. Please contact your family doctor should you have any concerns regarding immunisation.

Allergies: If your child has an allergy then the school requires special forms to be completed and Health plans written if necessary.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS HAD A DAY OFF SCHOOL?

If your child is away send a note on the first day back to explain the reason for the absence (it is a legal requirement that absences be covered by a written explanation)

SUN SMART POLICY

Our school has a 'Sun Smart' Policy that endorses the use of hats and sunscreen. Children are to wear their hat every day of the year. Parents are encouraged to put sunscreen on their children. Children without hats are required to play in the shade.



OUR SCHOOL DAY – COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers are professionals who need to regularly update their knowledge and skills so as to provide quality education. Teachers spend a great deal of time engaged in planning and professional development.

Throughout the school year every school has 5 pupil free days. When staff development days are planned, you will receive at least three weeks notice of the date and the purpose of the day. One of these days is always the first day of each new school year. On occasional days throughout the year, class teachers are released from class to attend in-service courses. Qualified relief teachers continue the teacher's daily program on these days.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

There is regular communication with parents in a variety of ways:

- Weekly Newsletter- available on the website each week or in paper form on request
- Meet and Greet Nights – (Early Term 1). Kindergarten parents will be invited to an information evening where the class teachers will discuss home readers and other classroom protocol.
- Parents & Friends Meetings (Once a Term)
- Parent Teacher Interviews – (Late Term 2)
- Class Overviews – (Beginning of each term)

If you have a specific request or concern relating to your child please contact the school and the teachers will be more than willing to make an appointment with you at a time convenient to all.

REPORTING TO PARENTS

PARENT INFORMATION EVENINGS

Early in Term One teachers hold a 'Meet and Greet Night'. This night is to give parents the opportunity to meet with the class teacher and tell them about their child/ren's strengths, interests and areas of special need.

Student reports are sent to parents at the end of Terms 2 and 4.

Please do not attempt to conduct an interview with a teacher in the playground while a teacher is on duty or at the start of day assembly. *A parent or teacher may request an interview with the Teacher or Principal at any time during the year via the school office.*

CLASS PAGE INSTRUCTIONS

Each class/grade, 1 – 6, has a class page on the school's intranet site; this is a tool to support the students' learning. This site enables the students to access resources posted by their teacher(s); the page might include e-Learning Folios (eLFs), links to the internet, tasks, notes, assignments, Class Notice Board, Class Files, Class Journal, Portfolio Viewer, Class Wiki, Scootle, Webquests, Class Calendar and email access. Inclusions on the class page will depend on the age of the children and the topics being studied. This is a managed way for the students to access a broad range of resources in a safe manner. Students can access their class page from home; teachers detail access to the class page in their term overview. Access to class pages commence in Year One.



ANNUAL SCHOOL REPORTS

All schools are required to produce an annual Report. The School's Annual Report is available on the school website and at the school office.

OUR SCHOOL DAY – THE WAY WE WORK (OTHER POLICIES)

All school policies are currently under review and will be updated on the school website during mid 2012.

The following draft policies are available in the School Foyer:

- School Policy Against Bullying
- Sun Protection Policy
- School Uniform Policy

OUR LEARNING DAY – THE CURRICULUM

Learning at St Gerard’s is often integrated across several curriculum areas. The classroom teacher ensures that the teaching programme follows the guidelines set down by the N.S.W. Board of Studies and covers all curriculum areas.

CURRICULUM

Underpinning all KLA’s (Key Learning Areas), indeed all teaching, is that knowledge, skills values and appropriate attitudes are taught. The emphasis in past years has been on teaching knowledge, that is, teaching facts. However, our focus has now shifted in order to prepare our children for the future. Much more emphasis is placed on skills and, in Catholic Schools, on values and attitudes. We recognise that today’s children will need to be life-long learners, which is why correct attitudes to learning are so important.

Information, Communications and Learning Technologies (ICLT)

An emphasis has been placed on technology at St Gerard’s and its value, as a learning tool will be increasingly utilised. Computers are used to enhance the learning process in all Key Learning Areas and to facilitate integration across the KLA spectrum. St Gerard’s has access to class pages, laptops, netbooks and interactive whiteboards. Stage 2 & 3 classrooms all have interactive whiteboards. The library has a bank of laptops. Students and teachers use these to make learning interactive and fun.

OUTCOMES

The NSW Board of Studies designs a syllabus for each KLA based on ‘Outcomes’. Syllabus Outcome Statements define the specific intended results expected from the teaching of each subject. They provide clear pictures of the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes expected to be attained by most students at the end of a stage.

An example of an outcome taken from the English Syllabus which pertains to Early Stage One Writing (Kindergarten) is:

‘Begins to use letters to represent known words when spelling.’

STAGES

Today each syllabus is written in stages and no longer in class or grade groupings. The stages in Primary School are:

Early Stage One	Kindergarten
Stage One	Year 1 and Year 2
Stage Two	Year 3 and Year 4
Stage Three	Year 5 and Year 6

OUR LEARNING DAY – RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Religious Education curriculum acknowledges and supports the parents in their role as the children's first educators in faith. The curriculum is designed to develop sequentially the individual's growth in, and understanding of the wonderment of, a faith relationship with God our Father, His Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. An important component of Religious Education is lived experience which recognises spiritual life as an integral part of everyday life at the child's age and level of development.

Through the curriculum the children are invited to participate in this faith relationship by learning about the history and traditions of the Catholic Church and the Scriptures. The school curriculum content supports the family's instruction in the children's preparation for the Sacraments.

SACRAMENTAL PROGRAM

The school works in partnership with the Parish. The Sacramental programs are organized by the Parish Sacramental Coordinators. Parents and children work in small groups to prepare for each Sacrament. Meetings happen after school and on weekends.



OUR LEARNING DAY – ENGLISH

English is made up of the following strands:

Reading In this strand, pupils learn to interpret literary and factual texts. We now place a greater emphasis on 'Text Types' in all strands of English.

Examples: Narrative (story)
Information Report (facts and information about a topic)
Recounts (re-tell)

Writing

Children learn to write and produce a variety of texts thereby achieving the ability to use such processes as drafting, revising, conferring, editing, proofreading and publishing. Grammar is a method of describing how a language makes meanings clear within a culture. It is best taught in the context of the strands outlined above.

Talking and Listening

Students learn to communicate and interact effectively for a variety of purposes and in various situations with different audiences such as friends, small groups and a whole class.

OUR LEARNING DAY – MATHEMATICS

Outcomes for Mathematics are organised in six content strands in which pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding in:

- Working Mathematically
- Numbers
- Patterns and Algebra
- Chance and Data
- Measurement
- Space and Geometry

Values and attitudes operate across all strands and are not attached to special outcomes. Maths is a *creative* activity. An investigative approach is employed and an extensive variety of concrete materials are used to ensure concepts are understood. In addition technology, including computers and calculators, are used to assist students.



OUR LEARNING DAY – HUMAN SOCIETY & ITS ENVIRONMENT (HSIE)

The aim of H.S.I.E. is to develop values and attitudes, knowledge, skills and understanding in students that: enhance their sense of personal, community, national and global identity, and; enable students to participate effectively in maintaining and improving the quality of their society and environment.

There are four strands to HSIE:

- Change and Continuity
- Cultures
- Environments
- Social System and Structures

The HSIE syllabus allows for easy integration with Religious Education at St Gerard's as it places special emphasis on values and attitudes.

OUR LEARNING DAY – SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY (S&T)

The aim of Science & Technology is to develop in students competence, confidence and responsibility in their interaction with science and technology thus leading to an enriched view of themselves, society, the environment and the future; and an enthusiasm for further learning of science and technology.

The content strands of Science& Technology are:

- Built environments
- Information and communication
- Living things
- Physical phenomena
- Products and services
- The earth and its surroundings

The syllabus requires students to learn about and engage in:

- The process of investigating
- The process of designing and making
- The uses of technology



OUR LEARNING DAY – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT, HEALTH & PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PDHPE)

The aim of this syllabus is to develop in each student:

- Self-esteem, social responsibility and well-being;
- Movement skills and personal fitness;
- The ability to make informed health and lifestyle decisions.

St Gerard's employs a P.E. teacher to assist with the P.E. strand of this K.L.A. Each class has at least one P.E. lesson each week. The children are involved in a program that progressively develops their skills in a variety of modified games. All children are allocated to a Sport Colour House for their time at St Gerard's. Your child will find out the colour house they have been allocated during the first week of school.

Three sports carnivals are held annually – swimming, athletics and cross-country running. Students from Year 3 also have opportunities to be involved in a range of gala days, including basketball, soccer, netball and rugby. Our children are eligible to be selected for state level sport competition for the Diocese of Broken Bay Sport Council.

OUR LEARNING DAY –CREATIVE ARTS

The aim is to develop a lifelong commitment to participate in each of these art forms. The four strands are:

Visual Arts

Music

Drama

Dance

Students are encouraged to appreciate the role of the arts in reaffirming, building and challenging society and culture. St Gerard's employs a specialist music teacher to assist with the music strand of this K.L.A. Each class has a music lesson once a week.

OUR LEARNING DAY – CO-CURRICULAR PROGRAMS

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

There are many enrichment opportunities at St Gerard’s for students to pursue interests and talents.

Chesalon Nursing Home Visits

Children with high interpersonal skills in Yrs 4-6 are selected to be a part of a special program where they extend their skills of ‘relating to others’. They visit the Chesalon Nursing Home twice a term and build up a reciprocal relationship with an older designated friend.

Children And Public Speaking (CAPS program)

Children from Years 2-6 participate in the CAPS program. There are several levels and every child must compete in the first level. Talented speakers go on to higher levels and winners in Stage 3 compete with children beyond the school.

Maths Olympiad

The Maths Olympiad team is a talented group that works together on higher order and divergent problem solving. They individually compete in the International Maths Olympiad competition annually.

‘Come On Kids’

This is an independent online program which challenges talented Maths students in a virtual classroom environment.

Science Challenge

Selected students meet together and work on a range of scientific investigations.

School Band

Children are able to join the St Gerard’s Junior Band from Year 3 and need no previous experience. Band involvement can benefit children in many ways. Apart from developing musical ability in a particular instrument and performance techniques, children gain valuable social skills and confidence from becoming an important member of a team.

Professional band musicians co-ordinate and facilitate the program. Small group lessons are conducted during school time. Children progress to the Senior Band. There are opportunities for the children to perform for the whole school, parents and wider community.

Choir

Children from Years 3—6 can join the Choir. The Choir rehearses once a week at 8.20 a.m. each Thursday morning. The Choir performs at key school events and religious celebrations.

Sport

Year 3 children and beyond have the opportunity to compete in various sporting Gala Days to showcase their skills.

Chess

Opportunities are available for children from Year 2 upwards to be professionally coached on a weekly basis. Each term children can join the Chess Club and extend their skills.



Leadership programs in Year 6

All children from Year 6 will have a number of opportunities to participate in school leadership opportunities. The opportunities include; the hospitality team, school leadership, colour house captains, social justice.

Buddy Program

The Year 6 children all enjoy their connection with the Kindergarten children. Kindy children will be allocated a Buddy at the beginning of the school year. The Buddies assist with learning playground rules and assist where there are protocols that need to be adhered to, i.e. sitting next to the Kindy children at Mass.

The Year 6 students take their leadership role seriously. Being a happy and responsible role model for their kindergarten buddy is an important part of their year. The Year 6 students meet with their buddies regularly and play the part of a big brother or sister helping the children to settle into their life at St Gerard's.

Kids' Garden

Parents generously donated funds to support the installation of a Kids' Veggie Garden. Children in Year 1 and Year 5 classes work in the garden on Wednesday afternoons. Produce goes to the Canteen and is sold at assemblies to parents (for a small donation) or goes home with the children.

YOUR OPPORTUNITIES TO CONTRIBUTE

PARENTS & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

The P&F Association of St Gerard's recognises and values the role that parents and carers play in the education of their children and aims to strengthen the partnership between family, school, parish and the wider community for the benefit of their children's overall development and learning. The P&F committee is made up of volunteer parents who take up roles on various sub-committees such as fundraising, social, clothing pool and maintenance.

The P&F will endeavour to do this by:

- a) Reaching out to all associated with the school to build a friendly and welcoming faith filled community which seeks to involve all its members.
- b) Providing a parental perspective to assist the principal in decision making.
- c) Raising funds to provide resources and opportunities for enriching the learning environment of the school.
- d) Providing a means for parents and carers to affiliate with the Diocesan Parent Council and have a voice at diocesan level and with the Council of Catholic School Parents (NSW) at state level.

All members of the school community are invited to attend P&F meetings. Parents can become involved by attending meetings or by becoming a member of a sub-committee.

THE ROLE OF CLASS PARENT

A major feature of the P&F is involvement in the *Pastoral Care* of the school community – building community; celebrating the good times and providing practical support in more challenging times.

The Role of the Class Parent is:

- To liaise between the school and parents providing an environment for parents to meet and socialise with others in the school community
- To provide a helping hand for various school activities
- To be contact persons for families within the school

PLAY GROUP

St Gerard's community hosts a "Playgroup" for families in our community. It is an informal session where parents, carers, babies and children aged 0 to school age come together in a relaxed and friendly environment.

- Playgroup gives children an opportunity to have fun, make new friends and develop new skills through informal play
- Playgroup provides parents and carers with an opportunity to meet other parents and carers, make friends and share ideas and experiences
- St Gerard's playgroup is a great way to get to know other families in our school community.