



ST THOMAS AQUINAS PRIMARY SCHOOL WEST BELCONNEN



INFORMATION BOOK 2026



Our School

St Thomas Aquinas
West Belconnen



We are a community *inspired*
by St Thomas Aquinas to deepen our *faith*,
to seek *knowledge* and to *flourish*.

In partnership with families and the community,
students are encouraged to be:



Compassionate



Resilient



Inclusive



Engaged



Welcome

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to St Thomas Aquinas Primary School. Thank you for taking an interest in our school as a community where your child can continue their educational journey.

It is a privilege to be Principal of our school. I always speak with pride about our vibrant and friendly school, especially its dedicated staff, welcoming parents and 440 highly engaged students from Preschool through the Year 6.

Our school motto 'To Care' is at the heart of everything we do. We recognise that each young person is unique, and that we share the responsibility to nurture them as they grow. To do this we strive to offer a safe and caring learning environment and skilfully provide opportunities and challenges that assist all students in preparing for a positive future for themselves and their world.

Situated on Ngunnawal land, with expansive and engaging school grounds, we are a supportive, inclusive and multicultural community that welcomes all. Our staff are highly professional, caring and collaborative. We prioritise supporting staff to continue growing in their professional expertise, enabling them to provide your child with the best possible teaching, every single day.

Partnership and collaboration are fundamental to supporting our students. We work closely with parents and parish to support their learning. Parents are involved in celebrating their child's successes and have many opportunities to engage in school life. St Thomas Aquinas Parish continues to be a great source of faith and support for us, particularly during preparation for receiving the Sacraments.

Please take the time to read the information contained here and make a time to visit our school and see our community in action.

I look forward to meeting you and your family.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew Garton
Principal



Contact Information

School Information

School Address	25 Lhotsky Street, Charnwood, ACT, 2615
Telephone	02 6258 4077
Email	office.staquinas@cg.catholic.edu.au
Website	www.staquinas.act.edu.au
Office Hours	8.20am to 4.00pm
Principal	Matthew Garton
Email	Matthew.Garton@cg.catholic.edu.au

Early Learning Centre Information

Telephone	(02) 6258 5834
Email	elc.staquinas@cg.catholic.edu.au
Office Hours	Tuesday to Thursday, 9.00am to 3.00pm
Director	Temi Salami

Parish Information

Parish Priest	Fr Tru Nguyen msc
Assistant Priest	Fr Chung Tran msc
Parish Centre	St Thomas Aquinas Parish 23 Lhotsky Street, Charnwood, ACT, 2615
Telephone	02 02 6258 1563
Email	charnwood@cg.org.au
Website	www.stthomasaquinascharnwood.com
Office Hours	Wednesday 8.00am to 4.30pm



Quick Facts About our school

Our Local Context

Our school is one of a system of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn. There are 5 Catholic primary schools in the Belconnen region.

Our school includes an Early Learning Centre serving all our Belconnen catholic schools. Students from our ELC move on to their local Catholic primary school for Kindergarten to Year 6.

Students from each of our Catholic primary schools typically continue their education at St Francis Xavier College, Florey.

Our Classes

We have two straight classes at each year level from Kindergarten to Year 6.

Each class typically has one dedicated teacher. Very occasionally classes might have two teachers that job share with well organised roles and responsibilities. All classes have set times to receive additional support from Classroom Support Assistants based on student needs.

Our ELC has one full-time class and two part-time classes.

Our Staff

We have a highly engaging and collaborative staff who enjoy building strong relationships with students and families.

Our Executive Team includes:

Principal	Matthew Garton
Assistant Principal	Carmen Myles
Religious Education Coordinator	Megan Smith
Curriculum Coordinator	Peter Collins
ELC Director	Temi Salami

We have a staff of approximately 23 teachers, 14 Classroom Support Assistants and 8 ELC Educators across the entire school.

All staff must have *Working With Vulnerable People* clearance.

All teachers are well qualified and registered with the Teacher Quality Institute (TQI), complying with annual training, child safety and professional learning requirements.

We have many very experienced and friendly assistants and educators. All have completed or are completing relevant qualifications for supporting students in educational settings.

Priority Enrolment Areas (PEAs)

All Catholic Primary Schools are designated with priority enrolment areas.

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School accepts enrolments from Charnwood, Dunlop, Fraser, Flynn, MacGregor, MacNamara and Strathnairn.

Our ELC accepts enrolments from the entire Belconnen district.

Any enrolment applicants outside of these areas will be contacted to discuss available options for Catholic education nearby.

Teaching & Learning

Religious Education & Catholic Life

Our purpose is to nurture the growth of all students as members of a Catholic community and through the spirit of a Catholic life and values.

Religious Education (RE) is an additional curriculum area based on the curriculum from [Brisbane Catholic Education](#). All students learn about Catholic faith and tradition and are invited to share their own experiences to create connections and meaning for our modern world. All students are nourished to develop the gospel values of faith, hope and love.

Our **Catholic life** is punctuated by traditions and practices that bring us together, creating a close community where we can celebrate and be thankful. Our school day involves small, brief moments of prayer. Parents are invited to whole school liturgies held for significant events including St Thomas Aquinas Day, Easter Liturgies, Advent Liturgies, NAIDOC Week and ANZAC Day. In recent years students have been attending Mass at St Thomas Aquinas Parish Church each term with their peer group.

Sacraments are a fundamental expression of our Catholic faith. While all students will learn about the sacraments as part of RE, only some prepare to receive a sacrament for the first time. The experience of sacraments is very personal to everyone. Catholic children and families who wish to undertake this are supported through a parish-based program.

An opportunity is provided by the parish to prepare children to celebrate sacraments with their peers in the following years:

- Year 3 - Reconciliation and First Eucharist
- Year 6 – Confirmation

Other Key Learning Areas

The Australian Curriculum forms the basis of classroom teaching and learning. It identifies essential content in **8 learning areas** that all students are to be taught.

The Australian Curriculum also allows flexibility for schools and teachers to include local and topical content. We use High Impact Teaching Practices to ensure deep learning of all knowledge and skills.

We teach to national achievement standards that ensure content is challenging and contributes to all students receiving a high-quality education.



General capabilities are included in the content of each learning area. These are the skills and abilities intended to help prepare young Australians to learn, live and work in the 21st century. The Australian Curriculum has seven general capabilities:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and Communication Technology
- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Ethical Understanding
- Intercultural Understanding
- Personal and Social Capability

In a similar way, there are three priorities critical to Australia's future:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Histories and Culture
- Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia
- Sustainability

They build across the curriculum and allow students to connect the content of learning areas.

For more information visit the [Australian Curriculum Website](#).

Knowledge Rich & Inquiry-Based Curriculum

Our school teaches the Australian Curriculum through a scope and sequence of units in each learning area that is both knowledge rich and encourages the development of inquiry skills.

We encourage students' curiosity and interest in their local and world community. We provide them with the opportunity to question, seek information, experiment, investigate and present their learning through guided inquiry-based learning.

We also recognise that students require fundamental knowledge about the world to inquire effectively. We explicitly teach information in history, geography, civics and citizenship, economics and business, science, health and the arts prior to inquiry, increasing their chance to learn effectively.

Each unit of work builds upon the knowledge of the previous, reducing repetition and increasing depth of understanding.

Special Programs

Chinese Language

In the Australian Curriculum all students are to learn a language in addition to English. All our students have one hour of Chinese language learning each week with our specialist teacher.

The Arts

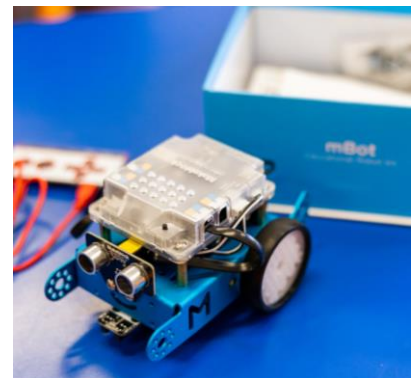
All students are taught appreciation for and technique in Visual Arts, Music, Drama and Dance by our specialist teacher. At specific year levels students will learn musical notation and composition through an introduction to simple instruments such as recorder and ukulele.

Library

In a lesson with our teacher-librarian each week where students will be exposed to classical and contemporary literature as well as regularly borrow to read for pleasure in their own time. They will learn the skills of information research; crucial as part of their growing independence in learning.

Digital and Design Technologies

Understandings and skills related to technologies are an inherent part of the curriculum and important for the future of our students. Our teacher ensures that students have opportunities to develop these understandings in 'unplugged' ways as well as through access to 3D printers and equipment including Beebots, spheros, EV3s and Makeymakeys. They have access to a Green Screen and programmable drone technologies to develop visual expressions of their learning.



Physical Education

All students have two dedicated Physical Education lessons a week to develop fundamental movement skills and to apply these in games, modified to their age group. These are taught by their classroom teacher. We also access Sporting School Grants that enable us to provide expert coaches for specific sport skills across every year level. These include sports such as tennis, athletics, rugby union and AFL.

Literacy & Numeracy – Foundations for Learning

Strong literacy & numeracy is fundamental to all children's success in school and life. Literacy & numeracy skills enable students to learn successfully in all other learning areas. At St Thomas Aquinas we prioritise teaching time & effort in ensuring every child develops these skills to their greatest capacity.

Our teaching methodology is founded on the most recent, evidence-informed practices for the teaching of English and Mathematics. Every day, informed by the *Science of Learning*, students are explicitly taught carefully constructed concepts, knowledge and skills through explicit instruction strategies with high student engagement.

Incorporating Cognitive Load Theory, students participate in a Daily Review of previously taught content, enabling them to move new knowledge from their short term to long term memory and recall it when needed. Students retain what they learn.

English

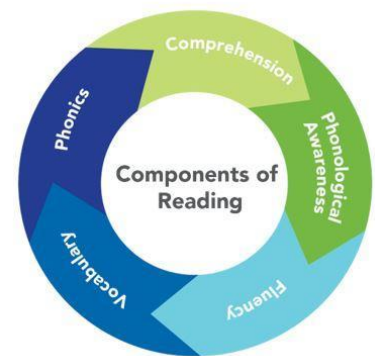
Our English curriculum includes experiencing, creating and appreciating language and literature through reading, writing and spoken opportunities.

From the outset, we are deeply committed to delivering on the promise of education, equipping every child with the ability to read - and read well! Learning to read is an essential skill to not only find success in school and to thrive in society, but to also experience the joy that reading brings. We want every child to be a successful reader.

Early Emphasis on Phonics & Phonological Awareness

The English language is complex. Our brains naturally learn to speak. They don't naturally learn to read. We must be taught. To be a successful reader students must first 'crack the code' of the relationship between the alphabet, spelling patterns and spoken sounds. From Kindergarten to Year 2 we focus on:

- building students' letter-sound knowledge
- accurately decoding words
- developing automaticity (making it natural and fast)



We follow a program of explicit and systematic phonics instruction called *Initialit* that progresses from simple to complex knowledge and skills with the aim of developing mastery. Students are also provided with the opportunity to build vocabulary knowledge as well as oral language and listening comprehension skills to strengthen their growing control over language.

To support developing mastery, all K-2 students have access to decodable readers. These are books or passages that only include words that the students practice 'decoding' using the knowledge and skills they have been taught thus far.

Building a rich literacy life

Throughout a student's journey at St Thomas Aquinas, informed by the *Science of Reading*, we build upon this foundation with the development of other important literacy concepts and skills.



Literature

Students are exposed to and encouraged to appreciate a broad spectrum of literature including Australian and classical. In younger years they are read to every day. From Years 3 to 6 students participate in novel studies to learn how language is crafted for joyful or informative reading.

Comprehension

The aim of any reader is to understand what they are reading. We enable students to develop this comprehension through:

- explicit teaching of vocabulary, including word origins and meaning and words specific to a topic;
- skilled questioning that supports thinking about texts;
- developing general knowledge to help understand the topic.

Writing & Spelling

Once we learn oral language, we can learn to read. Once we begin reading, we can learn to write. At St Thomas Aquinas, we explicitly teach the fundamentals of writing from the moment students have beginning knowledge and skills in reading. Through evidence-informed programs such as *The Writing Revolution* and *Spelling Mastery* students learn and practice fundamental spelling concepts as well as effective sentence, paragraph and text construction for a variety of purposes and contexts.



Once students begin to develop mastery and independence in all the literacy components above they use these skills to explore and express their learning in all other areas of the curriculum, continuously building their own capacity and impact on their world.

Mathematics

At St Thomas Aquinas we apply the *Science of Learning* to also focus time and effort each day in the explicit instruction and review of mathematical concepts and skills. Our teachers are skilled at providing daily opportunities for students to engage in learning new concepts, recall previously taught concepts and practice their application. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced from K-6 to progressively develop fundamental knowledge and proficiency in the areas of:

- Number
- Algebra
- Measurement
- Space
- Statistics
- Probability

It is our intention that students become confident users and communicators of mathematics who have the capacity to use their knowledge and skills in any necessary situations in both personal and academic lives.

Supporting individual progress

Assessment and Monitoring

At St Thomas Aquinas we closely assess and monitor student progress in literacy and numeracy from the moment they begin school. Using educationally sound assessment tools such as DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), PAT (Progressive Achievement Testing) and other tools we ensure that every student is continuing to experience growth in fundamental literacy & numeracy skills.

Extending learning

As part of our explicit instruction each student can apply their knowledge and skills in more complex examples and contexts. Teachers carefully plan these tasks each day. In some aspects of the curriculum students can participate in small group extension opportunities.

Early Intervention

If, through our observation and assessment, we see signs that your child may need assistance with the skills of reading and writing, we will not take a 'wait and see' approach. We immediately implement evidence-informed intervention programs such as small-group access to *Minilit* and *Macqlit* literacy intervention programs. We monitor their progress on a weekly basis. Early identification and intervention have been shown to have the greatest impact on maintaining age-appropriate literacy and numeracy progress.

Diversity & Wellbeing

Diverse Learning

We educate a diverse range of students in every classroom across the school. All teachers are skilled and supported in developing inclusive classrooms that cater for various needs and backgrounds of students. When these needs are highly complex, and students require additional support, we have specialist staff to provide that support to students, teachers and families.

Diverse Learning Team

The Diverse Learning Team is made up of our Diverse Learning Leader, Diverse Learning Teacher and Diverse Learning Assistants. The Classroom Teacher and Diverse Learning Leader are the primary liaison for parents and teachers of students with specific and complex needs. They work with parents and students to develop Personal Plans containing individual learning goals and adjustments that ensure the full access and participation of every student with complex needs. We also provide and coordinate support for teachers and students in the classroom, this includes training, special resources and sometimes the assistance of our trained Diverse Learning Assistants.

Counselling



Marymead CatholicCare provide the school with a counsellor on a part time basis. The counsellor is available to parents, students and teachers who seek advice or help for the emotional, social and educational well-being of students. Parents may request an interview with the counsellor, whilst teachers may at times refer students to the counsellor with parent permission. Parents are contacted before their child sees the counsellor. This service is a positive aspect of the school community.

Social & Emotional Learning

Throughout the year we implement social/emotional learning programs that enable children to develop age-appropriate skills in empathy, emotion management, skills for learning, social awareness and problem solving. Through teaching and support, students learn how to develop and maintain positive relationships over their time at school.

Trauma Informed

All staff are trained in Trauma Informed practices having completed the Berry Street Education program and use these practices in their classrooms. We aim to offer safety, connection and support in every classroom so students can engage successfully in their learning.



Protective Behaviours

Protective Behaviours is taught primarily in K-2 and then revisited in age-appropriate ways in Years 3-6. It is a program that empowers students to identify and respond to unsafe situations, fostering a sense of safety and well-being by teaching them about their rights, boundaries and how to seek help. In later years this includes online safety.

Student Leadership

Student voice is important at St Thomas Aquinas. Each year our students elect class representatives for the Student Representative Council (SRC). With the guidance of the Assistant Principal this body of students collates and prioritises school improvement ideas from classes and works to bring them to fruition. Most recently they requested funds from the School Community Council for the purchase of Lego tables for use during break times. They were successful in achieving this.

All Year 6 students at St Thomas Aquinas are expected to take an active role as community leaders. Each year, two students are selected as school captains while one student is selected as indigenous elder. All students undertake specific leadership responsibility in areas such as:

- Faith
- Hospitality
- Sport
- Environment

All Year 6 students learn how to conduct tours, organise and lead assemblies and liturgies, participate in outreach to the community, guide playground conflict resolution, lead teams at sporting events and mentor younger students. This is the culmination of the leadership and collaborative skills developed since Kindergarten.



Buddy Program

To create a happy and safe community, students also participate in a buddy program where older students are buddied with younger students. Over the course of the year they spend time in enjoyable learning activities together. Not only do the older students develop mentoring skills; the younger students build their network of trusted relationships at school, supporting them in their early years.

Learning Beyond the Classroom

While most learning occurs in the classroom, there are many opportunities for students to learn outside of the classroom. Students can pursue and enjoy educational, sporting and cultural experiences. The opportunities are always growing and adapting in response to student interests.

Excursions and Incursions

All our teachers plan special class or year level experiences throughout the year to support children's learning. These might include programs at well-known venues such as Questacon or lesser known but historically significant sites such as Lanyon House. Our Chinese, Library and Arts teachers also organise special visits by authors and performers to provide a rich learning opportunity. The cost for all these experiences is included in the school fees.

Camps

Our Year 5 and 6 students attend year level camps each year as an opportunity to delve deeply into a particular curriculum area such as Australian history or to develop collaboration and leadership skills through outdoor team pursuits.



Sports Carnivals & Gala Days

Our school holds three carnivals each year: *Swimming*, *Athletics* and *Cross Country*. In Physical Education students are taught the techniques and skills to participate in carnival events. While participation and community building are important for our carnivals, students who achieve high results can be selected to represent the school at local zone carnivals, then possibly go on to represent Belconnen in the ACT carnivals.

St Thomas Aquinas offers the opportunity for older students to participate in local gala days for various sports including rugby, oztag, touch football and netball.



Student Play Options

Our extensive grounds provide every child with plenty of room to run around and actively play with friends. They have opportunities for playing sport, climbing on our equipment, digging in our large sandpit and sitting in shaded areas with friends.

The Library is open during play time and students can enjoy reading, games and drawing with friends. There are also options in our Diverse Learning room for students who might feel overwhelmed by the large spaces and many people.

Enrichment

Students who are active learners and enjoy a challenge can participate in teacher led competitions including:

- Rostrum Public Speaking Competition
- DaVinci Decathlon
- Maths Games
- UNSW Competitions in Mathematics, English, Science and Digital Technology

We're always looking for more opportunities for our students to grow and extend their learning.

Weekend Sport

Like all ACT Primary Schools, we encourage our students to register and play for local teams in community sport. When registering we recommend indicating the school of attendance. Local teams will then ensure those students who attend the same school can play together. We have students playing soccer, netball, oztag, rugby and AFL.

Choir

Students from selected year levels are welcome to participate in the school choir. Students work with our Arts teacher to learn a repertoire of songs and develop their skills in singing and collaborative performance. Often the highlight of their year is performing at Parliament House.

Homework

St Thomas Aquinas does provide homework as a part of the learning process. It is not considered overly demanding and excessively difficult to complete. All students from Kindergarten to Year 6 are encouraged to read each night. Occasionally older students may also be asked to complete an assignment at home.



Family & Community Involvement

St Thomas Aquinas is a school that recognises and values the important partnership between school and family. The greatest benefits of this collaboration are felt by the students.

At this age children love to see family and friends doing something with them or supporting them in their educational experiences. To help us provide the best possible education for your children, your involvement as parents is always encouraged and welcome.

Involvement can be in many forms.

First, and foremost, it begins with supporting your child in their educational journey through:

- working with teachers to ensure your child feels safe and happy at school;
- ensuring your child is enjoying reading and/or being read to regularly;
- talking with your child about school (What went well today?);
- helping them explore their faith by talking about their learning and encouraging their participation in prayer, Mass and celebrating the Sacraments;
- ensuring homework is complete.

Your child will understand how much you value their schooling through regular or occasional involvement such as:

- support and attendance at school functions;
- assisting on excursions or at school carnivals;
- participating in the Sacramental Program;
- attending School Community Council meetings;
- assisting the class during Literacy and Numeracy sessions;
- sharing your knowledge and skills with your child's class;
- offering to help in our library;
- helping with the second-hand uniform pool.

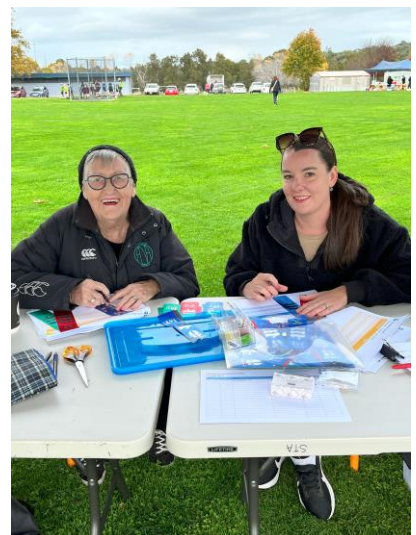
We know that every family's situation is unique and we appreciate that families will participate in whatever capacity they can.

Visitors & Volunteering

As we welcome all visitors and volunteers we also ensure that the school remains a safe place for children. All visitors and volunteers wear a 'Visitor' label during school hours and observe the sign in/out policy and procedures. This includes parent helpers and volunteers, tradespeople, Catholic Education staff, teachers and parents.

Volunteers are required to apply for a *Working with Vulnerable Peoples Card*. These are available at no cost when volunteering and forms may be obtained from the [Access Canberra](#) website.

The school offers guidelines to volunteers, coaches and managers for working with students to create positive learning experiences.



School Community Council (SCC)

The SCC provides the opportunity for parents, staff and other members of the School and Parish communities to support the mission of Catholic education at St Thomas Aquinas Primary School.

The Community Council has a vital role in helping to inform and set the direction that the school takes in providing the best educational opportunities for students in our local community context. Working with the Parish, Principal and staff, Community Council members also provide support for the community by:

- providing a meeting ground for parents and friends;
- providing an educational forum for parents;
- providing the opportunity for the Principal to report on the school's activities;
- organising social activities for the parent body;
- conducting fundraising.

The Community Council meets twice each term and offers open forums, with guest presenters, each year to support parents in various aspects of their role.

COMMUNICATION

Publications

Compass App

Communication is easy through our Compass App. Used consistently across all our system's Catholic schools the Compass App provides parents with the opportunity to receive timely communication from the school, email staff directly, check the calendar, monitor attendance, give permission for event participation and pay school fees. It's an all-in-one tool for staying connected with the school.



Newsletter

The Newsletter is published on our school website each Tuesday and the link is emailed to all families. It contains up to date information from the principal and staff, School Community Council, ELC and a variety of notices from the wider community.

General communication

At the beginning of the year we hold a Meet and Greet where families can meet the teacher and learn about the year ahead for their child's class. The School Community Council will also host a barbecue to welcome families.

We welcome parent visits to speak to the Principal, Assistant Principal, Diverse Learning Teacher or Class Teachers. It's our experience that when free and open communication is maintained, any concerns are more readily resolved. Appointments are the best way to ensure that our staff can provide the dedicated time to meet. Of course, teachers will always be available outside of their usual teaching hours.

Appointments can be made through office staff for the Principal and Assistant Principal. Appointments for all other staff can be made directly with them.

Reporting about student achievement

Formal reports on student progress are sent home at the end of Semesters 1 and 2 each year. In addition, parents can attend Parent/Teacher Interviews or 3 Way Conferences through the year.

Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goal setting meetings• Progress Reports
Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semester 1 Reports• Parent-Teacher Interviews
Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three-Way Conferences
Term 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Semester 2 Reports• Parent-Teacher Interviews

Student Health

Upon enrolment the school works with families to ensure that any specific health or medical needs of a student are easily managed, having minimum impact on their access and participation in school life. This includes administering prescribed medication.

We are very experienced at implementing approved management plans for asthma, allergies, anaphylaxis, epilepsy and diabetes.

All staff have appropriate First Aid qualifications. We also have strong policies, practices and experience in supporting students through accidents and emergencies at school and maintain strict sick bay records and communication practices with parents.

As a parent it is very important to keep all student health information up to date with the school.

Immunisation

It is an ACT Government regulation that all children attending schools in the ACT be immunised. The school is obliged to formally collect forms that verify immunisation. Where parents object to immunisation, a formal letter indicating this objection must be provided. In such cases, the ACT Health Department will be notified about a child's lack of immunisation. In the event of a contagious illness being reported at school, children without the appropriate vaccinations will be excluded from school. We strongly urge all families to fully immunise their school age children.

Kindergarten health Check

ACT Health visits the school each year to provide Kindergarten students with a free, thorough medical screening. Other children will be seen on request. After consultation with parents any child with a specific need is referred to appropriate specialist services.

Nut Free School

Nuts have been identified as a major cause for an allergic reaction by students in our community. Students and staff are expected to refrain from bringing food that contains nuts. Teachers monitor this during eating supervision times. Students are not permitted to share food to help manage any other food related concerns.

Positive School Culture

A calm, ordered and kind learning environment, based on our school values, is what we seek to create at St Thomas Aquinas. Students who feel safe and happy can focus on their learning. We are proactive in the way we set up and maintain this environment.

At St Thomas Aquinas we have four core expectations for all members of our community:

- We care for ourselves
- We care for others
- We care for our school
- We practise gratitude



Each term we start with an orientation program where staff and students learn and understand what these mean in various contexts. We also teach and reinforce our school routines and expectations so that everyone has a clear and shared understanding of the ways we all respect ourselves, others and the environment.

We believe that 'you get more of what you focus on'. With this in mind, we have strong systems to spot, acknowledge and celebrate consistently positive student choices, achievement and behaviour. These include the cumulative collection of tokens, public acknowledgement through certificates, celebrations for class achievements and end of term awards.

For various reasons students occasionally find it challenging to meet these expectations and we have a well-developed, supportive system of responses that help students return to participating positively in class or the community. These strategies might range from a simple reminder by the classroom teacher to return to task and extend right up to a suspension from school for one or more days. We will always work closely with families to assist these students.

Positive relationships and belonging are central to being a member of our school community and when student behaviour impacts on others, we always help them to undertake simple strategies to 'make things right' and restore relationships.

Our school's Positive Behaviour Policy is available on our [school website](#).

Day to Day

Classrooms

All our classrooms are comfortable, roomy and well furnished; set up to maximise student engagement and learning. There are spaces for small group and individual assistance when required.

Each teacher utilises large interactive LCDs and other multimedia tools to present learning in an engaging and contemporary way.



School Hours

8.30am	Supervision begins – drop off commences
8.50am	Morning assembly
9.00am	Learning Session 1
11.00am	Lunch (1 st Break)
11.40am	Learning Session 2
1.20pm	Afternoon Tea (2 nd Break)
1.50pm	Learning Session 3
3.00pm	Dismissal
3.20pm	Supervision concludes

Supervision

Student safety is very important to us. We provide significant supervision before and after school. For legal and safety reasons students should not be on the school grounds outside this supervision unless attending OSHClub, the ELC or sport training.

The first ten minutes of each break time students are seated and supervised by their classroom teacher to ensure they take time to eat. During play time staff are rostered to supervise every play space. A staff member is always visible to students. Any students with complex needs that require additional play support are supervised one-to-one.

Each afternoon we ensure that each student is supervised as they:

- go to OSHClub;
- catch a school bus;
- cross the road to walk home;
- are picked up at the drive through area.

OSHClub

St Thomas Aquinas is pleased to partner with OSHClub to provide out of hours care for our students. Friendly and qualified staff provide stimulating craft and sport activities in an atmosphere that is relaxed and homely. All food is healthy, fresh and nutritious. Families using the service can attract the [Child Care Subsidy](#).

They are open from 7.00am and close at 6.00pm. In the early days of Kindergarten they will come directly to the classroom to collect children using the after school service. During the school holidays they provide a vacation care program. Further information about what OSHClub provide can be found on their website at the dedicated [St Thomas Aquinas](#) page.

School Buses

Several bus services provided by [Transport Canberra](#) and [CDC Canberra](#) support our families in sending their students to our school. For route information please visit the websites through the links above. Each afternoon, students catching buses are directly supervised at the school bus stop until they get on the bus.

Canteen

Our school operates simple over the counter sales for students at each break from Wednesday to Friday. Prices are kept simple. We endeavour to provide healthy and affordable options.

We partner with our local Subway store to provide lunches for students each day. Parents can order these online and they will be delivered to the school prior to lunch beginning. Students collect these from the Front Office.

School Uniforms

All students at St Thomas Aquinas are expected to wear the school uniform as part of the enrolment agreement. The uniform policy is designed to:

- be functional, comfortable and safe for engaging in school;
- be affordable and sustainable for families;
- unite the students as part of a shared community and contribute to a sense of belonging.

Each week students wear two uniforms:

- **everyday uniform** – common to all Catholic schools and allows students to easily move between work and play. In Terms 1 and 4 they wear the summer uniform. In Terms 2 and 3 they wear the warmer winter uniform.
- **sport uniform** – specific to each school allowing greater comfort for physical activity and providing a distinct look when playing against other schools.

Year 6 students have the option of a special sport shirt to identify them as leaders and recognise their final year of primary school.

Uniforms can be purchased from *Lowes School Wear*. This supplier will sell the correct uniform as they have all been notified of our current school uniform requirements.

Our Community Council run a Clothing Pool for families. This Clothing Pool provides clean items of uniform for re-use. It is popular for dropping off items that have been outgrown and finding items that are affordable. This Clothing Pool is run by volunteers and open on a regular basis.

Specific information about our uniform can be found on our [school website](#).

Attendance

In accordance with the requirements of the *Education Act 2004* parents are asked to support their children in the habit of regular attendance. Each day's learning builds upon the previous day's and any repetitive and unnecessary loss of time impacts on student growth. We also recognise that illness and family emergencies are unavoidable and that students need recovery and rest to to engage in school.

We are required to keep strict records of attendance and expect parents to notify us of an absence through the Compass app. If we do not receive notification for a number of days the school will make contact to ascertain the reason for the absence and to provide support if required. We encourage open communication between parents/carers and teachers to ensure every student can engage fully in their learning.

School Fees

All Catholic Schools are supported with some government funding. This enables our schools to remain affordable for families who choose a Catholic education. To supplement the funding, Catholic Schools must charge school fees. School fees are set annually by Catholic Education Canberra & Goulburn, taking the local context into account.

School Fees cover:

- Tuition
- Stationery and other consumable products used by students
- Whole class and whole school excursions and incursions
- Operating costs
- Use of all technology to support learning
- Some maintenance requirements (the voluntary Building Fund covers much more of this).

Accounts are sent out at the start of each term through Compass. Parents may choose to pay in full or by instalments. There are several options available for parents that assist them in making payment of school fees simple and manageable.

For those families seeking a Catholic education for their children, and are experiencing financial difficulty, an appointment can be made with the school Principal to discuss options, including a 12-month Fee Concession agreement. We understand that there are times that families experience financial difficulties. It is our conviction that no student will be refused enrolment or be disadvantaged because of a difficulty to meet financial requirements.

Catholic Education offer a progressive discount as more siblings are enrolled in Catholic schools. They also offer a discount when families have students in both primary a secondary Catholic systemic schools.

2025 Annual School Fees

Number of Primary School Students						
Number of Secondary School Students*		1	2	3	4	5
	0	4216	6381	7702	8558	9414
	1	3831	5995	7317	8173	9029
	2	3831	5382	6680	7978	9029
	3+	2193	3489	4787	6083	7398

What does this look like per student, per term?

Number of Primary School Students						
Number of Secondary School Students*		1	2	3	4	5
	0	1054.00	541.13	330.43	213.95	213.95
	1	957.72	541.13	330.43	213.95	213.95
	2	957.72	387.88	324.43	324.45	262.70
	3+	548.22	324.13	324.43	323.95	324.45

*Please note the following:

- The discount for students in a systemic secondary school includes students at SFX, Merici, JPC or MacKillop. Students at other secondary schools do not attract the discount.
- The annual fee does not cover camps or selective sporting excursions (e.g. Boorowa, regional carnivals)

Enrolment

St Thomas Aquinas Primary School has a diverse student population and accepts students from Catholic and non-Catholic families.

ELC Students must have turned four and Kindergarten children must have turned five years by 30 April in the year of enrolment. Enrolments for students in higher grades must be age appropriate with their cohort. Early entry enrolments for gifted and talented students or for students of defence force families who experience high mobility will be considered according to Catholic Education policy. Please contact the Principal to discuss whether these options are relevant for your child.

When enrolment applications exceed the number of available spaces then the following hierarchy of priority applies in considering enrolment applications for St Thomas Aquinas in order of:

1. Children baptised Catholic who are members of St Thomas Aquinas Parish.
2. Siblings of children already attending St Thomas Aquinas Primary School.
3. Children baptised Catholic from other parishes who cannot obtain places in their local parish primary school.
4. Children baptised Catholic whose parents/guardians seek to enrol them in a parish school outside their own parish but who can obtain places in their own parish primary school.
5. Other children whose parents/guardians desire and are committed to a Catholic Education.

We highly encourage all interested families to enquire at the school about availability of places than to assume that places are limited.

Enrolling at St Thomas Aquinas is easy. Simply fill in the online Catholic Education enrolment form. When submitting an application, it must be accompanied with copies of the child's:

- Birth certificate or passport
- Immunisation history record
- Baptism certificate (for those identifying as Catholic)
- Proof of residential address (rates notice, electricity bill, etc)

Other information may also be required depending on the family circumstance. Originals of these documents will need to be sighted at the subsequent enrolment interview. There is an administration fee of \$50.00 which is payable at the time of enrolment.

Enrolments for next year are accepted and processed during the advertised enrolment period prior to the commencement of the school year. The school does understand that this is not always possible. Parents moving into the area during the year may enrol their children at any time if places are available.

The process of enrolment is as follows:

1. The parents complete an online enrolment form from our website www.staquinas.cg.catholic.edu.au.
2. Scan and attach relevant documentation and pay the enrolment fee of \$50.00 online. Alternatively, you may attend the school requesting an Application for Enrolment Form.
3. On receipt of the completed form the school will contact parents to arrange an interview. The school will need to sight the original birth certificate, baptismal certificate (if baptised), immunisation records and proof of residential address.
4. The interview provides an opportunity to discuss your child's/children's enrolment and needs. If a child has a specific learning need, every effort will be made in the interview to begin planning for the student's success at St Thomas Aquinas. Therefore, our Diverse Learning Leader, as well as a CEO Representative, may also be present at the interview to advise and plan support.

Preparing to Start School

Once the enrolment process is complete, we have a number of processes to help you and your child(ren) begin school successfully at St Thomas Aquinas.

Kindergarten Orientation

In Term 4, children enrolled for Kindergarten in 2026 will participate in an Orientation Program that includes an Information Night for parents and orientation sessions for students. Families will receive information packs and students will meet with their teachers, spending time in classrooms with their new classmates. We will conduct observations of students and have additional supports in classrooms to assist students to settle and feel comfortable. Students will also meet their big buddy for next year, an older student that will help them to settle into school when they start.

Students with Complex Needs

Any students who have identified needs requiring additional consideration will be offered a more tailored program for Orientation that allows extra visits to become more familiar with spaces, people and routines. The Diverse Learning Leader will assist with planning this process.



ENROL ONLINE

YOU CAN NOW ENROL ONLINE
OR THROUGH ANY MOBILE DEVICE IN FOUR STEPS

APPLY ONLINE VIA OUR ENROLMENT LINK:

<https://enrolments.staquinas.act.edu.au/act-primary-enrol/start>



Apply online through the online enrolment link in the school's website

Submit relevant documents and pay the application fee (if applicable)

Sign the completed application form and submit to school

Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their application by the school.

A non-refundable application fee applies to ACT Schools, ELCs and some NSW schools.

- ELC:
\$55 upon submission
- ACT Primary:
\$50 upon submission
- ACT Secondary:
\$50 upon acceptance

Some NSW schools may charge a nominal application fee.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED

1. Birth certificate (not commemorative) or passport.
2. Certificate of Baptism (if applicable).
3. Student's immunisation records (applicable to all NSW schools and ACT Primary and ELC).
4. Family Law, Personal Protection Order or Other Relevant Court Orders (if applicable).
5. Last report from previous school (not applicable for Kindergarten enrolments).
6. Visa grant notice and passport copies for permanent and temporary visa-holders (if applicable) – for both student and parent(s) / legal guardian(s).
7. Any medical reports and/or other assessment reports for students with additional learning needs (if applicable).
8. Proof of residential address, such as rates notice, electricity, water or telephone bill (applicable only to ACT Primary and ELC).

For support, please contact the school on 6258 4077
or via email office.staquinas@cq.catholic.edu.au



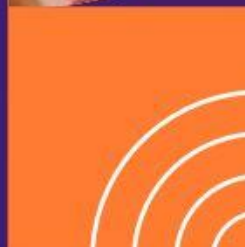
Outside School Hours Care

Awesome activities and amazing adventures await!

Our innovative programming will spark imagination and curiosity in every child.

BOOK NOW oshclub.com.au

**Join The Fun
Be Active
Get Together**



Every day is a new adventure!



Before School Care | After School Care | Holiday Programs



Engaging Programs

We'll empower your child to explore, navigate, experiment and engage in a wide range of experiences.



Educators Who Care

Our educators will embrace your child's journey: caring deeply, thinking creatively and inspiring them to thrive.



Future Ready

We focus on building knowledge, skills and behaviours that help prepare your child for a world yet to be imagined.



Fabulous Food

We fuel curious minds and growing bodies, helping to shape your child's understanding of health and wellness positively.



Unified Partnership

As an integral part of your school community, together, we'll create a fun and engaging environment for your child to flourish.



Peace Of Mind

You can be confident that your child is safe, happy and given every opportunity to fulfil their potential.

