“I am the way, the truth and the life.”

John 14:6
Contact Information

St Thomas the Apostle Primary School
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St Thomas the Apostle Church
Parish Priest  Father Peter My PP
Address  37 Boddington Crs KAMBAH ACT 2902
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2017 School Year Term Dates

Term I  Friday 27 January Staff commence
  Monday 30 January  Years 1 - 6 commence
  Tuesday 31 January  Kindergarten commence
  Friday 7 April  Term 1 concludes

Term 2  Monday 24 April  Friday 30 June

Term 3  Monday 17 July  Friday 22 September

Term 4  Monday 9 October  Friday 15 December

2017 Kindergarten Commencement Dates and Timetable

Week 1
  Tuesday 31 January  9.30 am - 12.30 pm
  Wed 1 – Fri 3 February inclusive  9.00 am - 12.30 pm

Week 2
  Monday 6 February  9.00 am – 3.10 pm
  Tuesday 7 February  9.00 am - 3.10 pm
  WEDNESDAY 8 February  REST DAY (No School)
  Thursday 9 February  9.00 am – 3.10 pm
  Friday 10 February  9.00 am – 3.10 pm

Daily Timetable

School Commences  9.00 am
Recess  10.50 – 11.30 am
Lunch  1.00 – 1.40 pm
Dismissal  3.10 pm

Supervision of children is between 8.40 am and 3.30 pm.
Children should not be in the school grounds before 8.40 am or after 3.30pm.
St Thomas the Apostle Staff 2016

Principal          Mr David Thiele
Assistant Principal Mrs Judy Egan
RE Coordinator     Mrs Kerry Wode
Curriculum Coordinator Mr Mark Bazzana
Office Manager     Mrs Jodie Luhrs
Publications Officer Mrs Lynette Wilson
Teacher/Librarian  Mrs Judy Egan
Learning Support   Ms Cathy Duffy
Music              Mrs Zita Clifford
Indonesian         Mrs Zita Clifford
KW                  Ms Patty Porteus
KB                  Mrs Bernadette Meffert
1W                  Mrs Judith Wojcik & Ms Aimee Barry
1B                  Miss Lucy McMillan
2W                  Miss Jessica Neubeck
2B                  Miss Rachel Kelly
3/4W                Mrs Anne Barbic
3/4B                Mrs Tarthra Kennelly & Miss Kaitlin Reedy
3/4R                Miss Laura Knight
5/6W                Mrs Leah Godfrey
5/6B                Mrs Nikki Arcidiacono
5/6R                Mrs Natasha Pank
LSA                 Ms Nicole Joyce
                     Mrs Karen Bruce
                     Mrs Lynette Wilson
ECT                 Mrs Angie Kisiel
                     Mr Mark Bazzana
Canteen Manager    Mrs Paula Papandrea
Chess               Mrs Kerry Wode
LS                  Ms Cathy Duffy
                     Mrs Kerry Wode
                     Mr Mark Bazzana
Sport & Release     Miss Rachel Kelly
                     Mrs Angie Kisiel
LA                  Mrs Colleen Mulheren
LT & Release        Mrs Natasha Pank
                     Mrs Tona Tallarida
Janitor             Mr Mick Kennedy
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1. Welcome

Dear Parents,

You are very welcome to St Thomas the Apostle Primary School and it is my hope that these early school years will be happy and rewarding for your child as school and family grow together in harmony and good will. It is certainly our privilege to work with you and to share with you the responsibilities of educating your child in preparation for the future. At St Thomas the Apostle we endeavour to create a happy, safe and nurturing climate for the children in our care.

We all have a responsibility to care for and support our school. This care should permeate every aspect of school life, be based on our shared values and affirm the dignity and worth of each member of our school community. By coming together as a caring community we can nurture in our children a faith-filled relationship with Christ in whom all Christian values have their foundation.

Teaching and learning are the core business of our school. In addition to our Religious Education and values program, there is great emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy. Through linking our core curriculum areas we strive for relevance and authenticity for our teaching and learning to assist the children to develop skills for an enriching, active and purposeful future.

The following pages contain some practical details to inform you about St Thomas the Apostle Primary School. Should you have any queries or wish to discuss matters concerning your child, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to meeting you in the near future.

David Thiele
Principal
2. Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement provides context and structure for learning, teaching and growing at St Thomas the Apostle Primary School. It states:

Our Mission as the Community of St Thomas the Apostle, Kambah is to follow Jesus,

The Way,

The Truth,

and The Life,

by providing a welcoming and supportive learning environment where we strive to live the gospel values of love, compassion, forgiveness, justice and peace.

At St Thomas the Apostle Primary School:
We believe that we share, celebrate and grow together as a Christ-centred faith community to encourage a sense of belonging to God’s family.

We believe that positive relationships develop in an atmosphere of trust, which recognises the dignity of each person.

We believe that it is our responsibility to provide quality education, which allows the full potential of all in the community to be developed.

We believe that each person is unique and gifted and we will provide opportunities for experiencing success, happiness and fulfilment.

We believe that the Catholic School has a special role in the Parish community and therefore we aim to develop effective partnerships with parents, families and the wider community.

We believe in building a caring environment that encourages children to make informed choices while recognising that personal freedom is linked with responsibility.

As parents at St Thomas the Apostle:
We actively support the staff in their efforts to provide a quality education that promotes the development of the whole person.

We are dedicated to a genuine partnership between parents and the school and accept the responsibility that comes with it.

We welcome all families to the school community, treating all with equality.

We value effort and achievement equally while encouraging all in our community.

St Thomas the Apostle School Prayer
Jesus,
You are the Way, the Truth and the Life.
Open our hearts to your love.
Help us to be true to you and to each other.
Give us the courage to be your disciples in all we do and say.
Thank you for our school community,
a place of wonder, learning and peace.
Unite us with St Thomas when we say
“My Lord and My God”.
Amen
3. Exit Outcomes

At St Thomas the Apostle we work toward ensuring that our students leave our school with an understanding and knowledge of the following:

CITIZENSHIP

The children are encouraged to:

• Respect and understand the interdependence of rights and responsibilities of themselves and others
• Be actively involved in the school community
• Respect the need for just rules
• Show and respect leadership
• Value cultural diversity and similarity
• Show concern for the environment

SPIRITUALITY

We at St Thomas’ strive to be like Christ by being:

• Compassionate • Joyful
• Prayerful • Truthful
• Forgiving • Faithful to Gospel Values
• Followers of Christ • Workers for Social Justice
• Sharers of the Good News

GLOBAL COMMUNITY

At St Thomas the Apostle we believe that we all share the responsibility for our world by:

• Respecting and appreciating the richness of all cultures
• Reaching out to make positive change
• Promoting equity and the dignity of each person
• Promoting and celebrating peace
• Reflecting critically on justice issues and the need for reconciliation
• Developing an awareness of the sacredness of our environment and our responsibility to care for all creation
THINKING

At St Thomas the Apostle we challenge the children to express their opinions and communicate effectively by being:

- Problem solvers
- Resourceful
- Interdependent
- Able to seek new challenges
- Creative
- Independent
- Discerning
- Resourceful
- Critical thinkers
- Active listeners

COMMUNICATORS

At St Thomas the Apostle the children will be given opportunities to learn to:

- Articulate confidently and fluently
- Actively listen
- Write legibly and effectively
- Comprehend, assimilate and respond to the written and spoken word
- Develop interpersonal skills
- Use technology with competence and skill
- Choose from a variety of methods of communication

BALANCE

At St Thomas we believe that everyone needs balance in life and we strive to do this by:

- Possessing a sense of personal mission e.g.; self care, others, community
- Being responsible risk takers who are also prepared to learn from mistakes
- Allowing/making time for various work and leisure activities
- Nurturing self-esteem and having a commitment to growth

CHARACTER

At St Thomas the Apostle we endeavour to provide an environment where children will grow in:

- Courtesy – respecting others and their ideas
- Self-discipline – reflecting on their actions and making informed choices
- Resilience – developing the ability to reflect positive risk-taking
- Tolerance – respecting people and their ideas, and value differences
- Humour – demonstrating a positive approach through humour
- Initiative – being self motivated
- Compassion – understanding the worth of each person
- Integrity – demonstrating honesty and responsibility
- Loyalty – being true to yourself and others
4. Parent Involvement

4.1 SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The School Community Council provides the opportunity for members of the school, parish and Archdiocesan community to support the mission of Catholic education in our school. Working with the Parish Priest, Principal and staff the Council members provide leadership to the school community. The School Community Council has a responsibility to provide advice and/or make decisions in the following areas:

- Supporting the development of the Catholic ethos of the school;
- Supporting the pastoral care strategies;
- Promoting the school in the local community;
- Developing the school’s enrolment policy in line with the Catholic Education Commission’s enrolment guidelines;
- Approving and monitoring the school-based budget including the fees collection and remission policy;
- Developing and monitoring of school enterprises e.g. hall hire;
- Developing capital and maintenance programs;
- Developing local strategic plans (finance, buildings, resources) and contributing to Archdiocesan educational strategic planning;
- Approving school uniform items decided at school level;
- Overseeing and providing students services e.g. canteen, before and after school care;
- Helping prioritise resource management and purchases to benefit the learning of all students;
- Providing opportunities for social events through the class parent group;
- Ensuring that all parents have a voice to raise issues of concern and ensure discussion is inclusive and open;
- Ensuring that the parish and school community receives the annual School Community Council report.

The School Community Council meets regularly throughout the year. The dates and times of the meetings are published in the school calendar and newsletter.

4.2 PARENT ASSISTED PROGRAMS

Parents are welcome to assist at the school in a variety of ways. Parents will be offered training as reading and writing tutors and are assured of support and further assistance if required. Parents are welcome to assist in the classroom according to curriculum needs and with the many school events that take place. The School Canteen is always appreciative of volunteers.

The school has a Class Parent program which is aimed at including and supporting all families in the school. This group is also essential in providing classroom support.

As from November 2013 all parent helpers are required to be registered under the Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking Act 2011) and hold a current WWVP card. For more details visit www.ors.act.gov or contact the school’s front office.
5. **Associated Support Services**

5.1 **SCHOOL COUNSELLOR**

CatholicCare provides our school with a professional counsellor for approximately one and a half days per fortnight. The services of the counsellor are available to both parents and students. Requests for appointments can be made through the principal by contacting the front office.

5.2 **HEALTH SERVICES**

Community Nurses examine and test all Kindergarten children for hearing, eyesight etc. All consultations are carried out with parental consent and assistance.

5.3 **KIDSMATTER**

St Thomas the Apostle is a KidsMatter School.

KidsMatter Primary is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children.

KidsMatter Primary provides the proven methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced children.

**The KidsMatter Framework**

KidsMatter fits naturally with the School Wide Positive Behaviour approach at St Thomas the Apostle. KidsMatter provides us with tools and support, both training and financial, to work with our community to nurture happy, resilient children with skills to manage social and emotional situations. We are currently implementing Component 2 of 4 of the KidsMatter Framework.
6. Policies

6.1 Student Welfare and Management Policy

At St Thomas the Apostle we aim to provide a framework for a School Management Policy which is founded on the belief that:

• Every child is an individual.
• Every child is entitled to respect, trust and dignity.
• Every child should know that he or she is loved and cared for under all circumstances.
• Every child should be allowed the opportunity to grow through their mistakes.
• Positive relationships develop in an atmosphere of trust where the dignity of each individual is recognised.
• Every child should be encouraged to make informed choices while recognising that personal freedom is linked with responsibility.

We work in partnership with parents and we have clear guidelines for contacting parents in the event of any issue concerning their child.

We have a Schoolwide Positive Behaviour Program called MATES. This program includes the development of clear rules and expectations for all students and its outcomes are social competence and academic achievement.

6.2 MATES

At St Thomas the Apostle Primary School we have developed a school wide positive behaviour system based on the concept of MATES.

Mates Are Thoughtful, Engaged and Safe.

Children can earn MATES cards distributed by staff, for demonstrating thoughtful, engaged and safe behaviours around the school and in the classrooms.

Examples of Thoughtful, Engaged and Safe behaviours for all areas of the school are displayed in the classrooms and around the school.

Children can trade their MATES cards for a series of coloured bands working towards a blue band.

The system is as follows:

5 MATES cards = 1 green band
5 green bands = 1 red band
3 red bands = 1 blue band

When a student achieves a Blue Band they also receive a certificate of recognition of this which is presented to them at a whole school assembly. As an added bonus to this achievement, the student has a special lunch with the school principal Mr Thiele.
6.3 Bullying Policy

At St Thomas’ we are very proactive in addressing bullying issues. The school Bullying Policy is reviewed annually and a copy is always available at the front office or via the school website.

6.4 Homework Policy

Children in Years 3–6 are given homework each week and parents are asked to assist teachers by providing supervision and encouragement. Please contact your child’s teacher if there are any problems. The homework policy is available on the school website.

We value homework as an opportunity for parents to be linked to the school and assist the children in establishing regular study routines for the future.

Every child is encouraged and supported to read every night.

**Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2** – A Home Reading program is implemented in all infants grades. This provides an opportunity for the children to share and practise their developing reading skills. In Kinder and Year 1 reading activities may be also given to the children.

In **Year 2** more formal homework beyond reading skills practice may be provided for those children ready for this.

**Years 3 and 4** – Teachers set written homework, which complements work already taught in class and should not exceed twenty minutes per night. Daily reading and listening to stories at home is essential to students’ literacy development.

**Years 5 and 6** – The time spent on written homework should be a minimum of thirty minutes, plus fifteen minutes of reading a day. As well as completing activities complementary to class work, children will be expected to complete assigned research tasks. They are encouraged and assisted by teachers to organise their home study timetable to ensure work is completed within set time limits.

6.5 Sun Protection Policy

The school recognises the danger and long term damage posed by lengthy exposure to the sun and has developed a Sun Protection Policy in accordance with recommended guidelines. The “No Hat, No Play” policy is strictly enforced. All children are to wear uniform hats unless exempted by a medical certificate. Children who do not have hats spend their time in the shaded area on the playground.
6.6 Pastoral Care and Leadership

School Houses

The School House teams are named after farming properties and homesteads that were in this area. They are as follows:

- Erindale
- Yellow
- Riverview
- White
- Coolamon
- Green
- Lanyon
- Red

New Kinder parents who attended St Thomas may nominate for their child to be in their old School House.

Monday Prayer

Each Monday morning the whole school gathers in the church to pray and introduce a value or scripture which will be the focus of teaching and living for the following few weeks. A different class hosts this special morning prayer each week. Parents are encouraged to attend if possible and also discuss and act on these values at home. Parents are also welcome to attend Module Prayer in the classrooms on Friday mornings.

Assemblies

Each Friday, the school captains lead the weekly assembly which showcases some of the learning taking place in the classrooms or across the school. The assembly is also used to award the efforts and achievement of the children across all aspects of school life. All parents are invited to attend.

Buddies

The buddy program at St Thomas' is about developing the relationships between the primary and the infants children in the school.

Primary children spend time throughout each term with the infants children as a whole class, small group and individually in both formal and informal activities. These activities might also include peer tutoring in reading to support the developing literary skills of the infant students.

Peer Support

Peer support is an integral part of our Student Welfare Policy, helping students from across grades to know and support each other on a daily basis. Nominated teachers attend professional development to prepare them for the role of facilitating training and weekly preparation of the student leaders. Each year our Year 6 students are trained by school staff to become Peer Support Leaders. Pairs of Year 6 students are then assigned 10-12 students from across the school into their peer support group. The Year 6 students are assisted by Year 5 Co-leaders as needed.

Peer Support is a program created to develop leadership in Year 5 & 6 students and also to create a supportive and positive student community within the school. The senior students are trained and guided in leading structured activity sessions with groups of mixed age students. The activities centre on building self-esteem, resilience, social skills and school identified values.
Seasons for Growth

The Seasons for Growth program is aimed at teaching strategies to students who have had to deal with issues of grief or loss. The program is particularly directed towards children and families experiencing breakdown of relationships.

Leadership Teams

Each student in Year 6 nominates to be part of a Leadership Team. Each team has responsibility for certain areas or functions within the school.

The teams and their roles include:

The Green Team
The Green Team keeps abreast of environmental issues and shares these with the student body and gives weekly reminders at assembly as to how we can be more sustainable. They look after our chickens and compost bins. Members of the Green Team also help the infants classes with their composting. Green Team members present the ‘Sustainability Award’ at Assembly each week to the class who has worked the hardest to reduce their waste.

The Fun and Fitness Team
The Fun and Fitness Team lead healthy initiatives at St Thomas’. They model and encourage all of their peers to display good sportsmanship on the playground through our MATES program of being THOUGHTFUL, ENGAGED and SAFE. The students take nominations for the ‘Fun and Fitness Award’ and present it to the weekly winners at Friday assembly.

The Hospitality Team
The Hospitality Team help set up for school functions such as morning tea after whole school masses and weekly Friday assembly. They are instrumental in the organisation of various fundraising activities such as the Easter egg raffle for Caritas during Lent. Every student at St Thomas’ looks forward to the annual talent show run by the team in Term 4. The Hospitality Team are able to assist in the canteen when they are short of volunteers after they have completed some training with the canteen manager.

The Technology Team
The Technology Team ensures that the school laptops and iPads are set up and packed away each day. They run the visual presentation at Monday prayer each week. Every Friday afternoon they set up equipment that is needed for Friday assembly. On a rotational roster the children help younger classes who choose to use the computers available in the library at lunch times.
7. Curriculum

At St Thomas the Apostle we teach a varied curriculum to the children in order to assist their spiritual and academic development. Religious Education is the thread that links all our teaching. We use the Key Learning Areas of the Australian Curriculum, updated and released by the Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA). Our main focus is teaching Literacy and Numeracy through linking all Curriculum areas such as Science, Technology, History, Geography, Health and Physical Education, The Arts and Indonesian (Years K-6).

7.1 Religious Education/Sacramental Program

Religious Education is woven into the daily life of the school through formal Religious Education lessons, the integration of Christian attitudes and values into other subject areas and the encouragement to live fully Christian lives. The R.E. Program uses Treasures New and Old and is linked closely to the Parish to further the children's sense of belonging to their Parish family. Opportunities for experiencing prayer and celebrating liturgy are regularly provided for the whole school community, including participating in Reconciliation and School Masses.

Various Liturgical events are celebrated throughout the year. These include: an opening school liturgy, grade Masses, Lent, Easter, Advent and other days of significance. Parents are invited to these Masses and Liturgies.

The Sacramental Programs for Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are very much parish-based with parents, Parish Priest and school working closely together. There is an expectation of significant parental and family involvement.

7.2 Literacy

The English curriculum is built around the three interrelated strands of Language, Literature and Literacy as developed in the Australian Curriculum. Teaching and learning programs balance and integrate all three strands. Together the three strands focus on developing students’ receptive skills of listening, reading and viewing, as well as their expressive and productive skills of speaking, writing and creating. Literacy learning builds on concepts, skills and processes developed in earlier years, and teachers will revisit, strengthen and develop these as needed.

Daily Literacy Blocks incorporate the processes of listening, speaking, reading, viewing and writing in an integrated and interdependent way. Students have access to quality literature both in the classroom and via the school library. Students are encouraged to learn new vocabulary through listening and reading and applying their knowledge and understanding in speaking and writing as well as in the comprehension of spoken, written and digital texts.
7.3 Mathematics

Mathematics is integral for children to understand our world. The Australian Curriculum, Mathematics sets out skills in Mathematical understanding, fluency, problem-solving and reasoning. Over the primary years children develop competencies in Number and Algebra, Measurement and Geography and Statistics and Probability. In Years K-3 children are involved in Count Me In Too (CMIT) activities, which are designed to improve mathematical knowledge and to encourage students to develop and articulate strategies for understanding numbers. Children are offered support to succeed in Maths through class grouping and small group teaching.

7.4 Pathways To Learning

At St Thomas the Apostle, the inquiry approach to learning and teaching is known as ‘Pathways to Learning’. Our implementation of Pathways Units from Kindergarten to Year 6 supports contemporary learning theory. This approach is built upon the idea that students are actively involved in learning and continually reconstruct understandings in the light of experience. It encourages students to participate in active investigation, and to integrate, rather than separate, knowledge, as they move from acquisition of facts to the development of deep understanding.

The integrated Inquiry units are planned so a sequence of activities and experiences is developed to build on and challenge student perceptions. Integrated Inquiry units bring together content from the Australian Curriculum in the key learning areas of History, Geography, Science, Technology, Arts and Health & PE.

Integrated Inquiry units are based on:

- higher order thinking skills
- problem solving knowledge
- connecting learning to the world beyond the classroom
- the acknowledgement and recognition of individual differences.

7.5 Information and Communication Technology

The school’s main aim is to ensure the children are competent and confident in using technology to support and enhance their learning. We strive to be responsive to emerging technologies and best practice with ICT use. All classrooms K-4 have a bank of iPads available for shared use. Years 5-6 have a BYOD 1:1 iPad program. Children have access to a bank of laptop computers in the learning “Break Out” areas and each classroom is equipped with Interactive White Boards (IWB) to enhance teaching and learning through the use of ICT.
7.6 **Sport and Physical Education**

Children have many opportunities to participate in a variety of sports, which aim to improve their physical fitness and co-ordination. Our emphasis is on enjoyment, skill development and willing participation.

In the Infants grades the emphasis is on the development of motor skills, coordination and team participation. Students from Kindergarten to Year 2 are involved in an intensive Gross Motor program.

In the Primary classes team sports such as soccer, netball, cricket and all football codes are introduced. Regular exercise and fitness are integral components of the school day and contribute to the wellbeing of our children.

All children participate in the school carnivals for Swimming, Athletics, and Cross Country.

Intensive swimming lessons are organised for Kindergarten to Year 4 students in Term 4. The Year 5 and 6 students participate in a variety of sports. The cost of these activities is included in the school fees.

Gym lessons are also organised for children from Kindergarten to Year 6. The cost for these lessons are also included in the school fees. St Thomas the Apostle participates in inter-school competitions in a range of sports through the Tuggeranong Primary Schools Sports Association.

7.7 **Languages (Indonesian)**

Indonesian is taught to all students. Each class has a weekly forty-five minute lesson. The aim of the Indonesian program is for the children to be able to communicate orally, in writing and to read a variety of texts. The students' understanding of the Indonesian culture is developed using topics such as self, family, school, housing, clothing, food and eating out, shopping, the calendar, sport and leisure.

7.8 **The Arts**

At St Thomas the Apostle the Arts are integrated into many curriculum areas and the students are given opportunities to respond creatively to a range of experiences. The children experiment with a variety of media to produce individual artworks. They are exposed to, and are encouraged to appreciate the work of artists, craftspeople and designers.

In Dance, children are fortunate to receive professional lessons using the Footsteps Program.

In alternate years, Year 5/6 students participate in the school's performance in Wakakirri – the Junior Rock Eisteddfod.

The school also has a choir which children can join. The choir sings at various school functions as well as special events such as Floriade.
7.9 Learning Support

The Learning Support Program primarily focuses on the development of Literacy and Numeracy skills. All students’ skills are tracked regularly and if there are any concerns in their development, assistance and extra support are given by the Learning Support Team. We aim to support all students, particularly in the early years of schooling. The Learning Support team works in close partnership with parents and class teachers.

7.10 Enrichment Programs

**Tournament of the Minds:** The students work in teams to solve problems in a range of Curriculum Areas.

**Rostrum:** An interschool public speaking program.

**Debating:** Students are involved in debating experiences within the school and with other schools in our district.

**Competition:** The students are encouraged to participate in many competitions and throughout the year students are also provided with information and opportunities to enter a range of Australia-wide activities or competitions.

**Chess:** Chess is taught to all Primary classes and the students enter the ACT Primary School Chess Competitions.

7.11 Excursions

Excursions link to classroom activities and provide students with practical experience of the curriculum.

An annual fee is charged as part of the levy system to cover the cost of all excursion activities. A separate fee is charged for the Year 5/6 Camp.

7.12 School Camp

Students in Year 5/6 have the opportunity to attend an overnight camp. The camp is a vital component of the Curriculum and all students are expected to attend. The organisation and timing of the camp is discussed in detail at the Parent Information Evening at the commencement of each year.

7.13 Extra Curricula Options

All children have the option to be involved in learning a musical instrument through Musicorp or private tutors for keyboard, piano and guitar which is integrated into the school day.
8. School Administration

8.1 Parent/Teacher Communication

Members of staff work closely with parents for the benefit of the children in their care. Therefore parents are always welcome to visit the school and speak with the Principal and/or teachers. It may be necessary to make an appointment first. An information night is held early in Term 1 with the classroom teachers and at this meeting school procedures are explained. It is a good occasion to meet your child’s teacher. All parents are encouraged to come and talk to teachers during Term 1. Each term teachers send home an information letter outlining the events and activities for that term. In Term 1 interim reports are sent home and parent/teacher interviews are available to discuss these.

In Term 2 and Term 4 written reports are prepared and parent/teacher interviews are again offered for parents to discuss their child’s progress around these.

The school newsletter is published each Thursday informing the community of happenings, events and general interest items. The newsletter is available on the school website and a link to the newsletter is emailed out to all families each week. A term calendar is available on the website.

Our school website www.sttap.act.edu.au is an important avenue for communication. All school policies and important information is regularly uploaded to the site.

The school also has an app for your mobile device which provides information on events at the school. It can be downloaded by following the links to Skoolbag on the school website.

8.2 Messages

 Interruption to classes must be kept to a minimum. Parents are therefore requested to make all necessary arrangements with their child before he/she leaves home in the morning, thus reducing the need to phone during school hours. Please make arrangements with your child if the weather is doubtful. Only in cases of emergency will messages be conveyed to students.

8.3 School Visits

If you are visiting the school for any reason you are required to sign in and out at the front office. It is also a requirement that you wear a visitors badge for the duration of your visit.

If you are staying to help with classroom activities or coaching, you will need to log a copy of your Working With Vulnerable People card with the front office.

8.4 Contact Phone Numbers

Parents are asked to notify the school immediately if there is a change of address, e-mail, home or work phone number. It is in the interest of your child’s welfare that these contact details are kept up to date.

8.5 Student Absences

Parents are requested to inform the school (teacher) of all absences. If an absence is planned in advance, a note explaining the absence is to be sent to school. All absences must be explained in writing and returned to the school as soon as possible. If your child is late, there is a Sign-In Book at the Office which parents are asked to complete.
8.6 Leaving the School Grounds

Children are not permitted to leave the school grounds during school hours. If it is necessary for a child to leave during school hours, a note must be sent to the child’s teacher explaining the reason and time they will be collected. All parents/guardians collecting students from school must report to the front office. The student will be called through the PA system to come to the office to meet their parent/guardian.

- Children are not called to the front office until the parent/guardian has arrived at the school.
- If children are to be collected during Recess or Lunch breaks, parents are asked to come to the school shortly before the bell (10:50 Recess, 1:00 Lunch) to collect their child.
- Parents must sign the ‘Sign-Out book’ in the front office.

8.7 Sickness at School

Office staff with current first aid qualifications will care for any student who becomes ill at school. If necessary, his/her parents, or a nominated contact person, will be informed and asked to take the child home. In the event of an accident the following procedures will apply:

(1) Minor Accidents (that is, normal scratches and bruises). The child will be treated and returned to class.

(2) Accidents of a more serious nature (that is, broken limbs, serious cuts, head injury etc.)
   Parents (and an ambulance, if necessary) will be notified.

Medication will only be dispensed to children with written parental permission. Please speak to the classroom teacher and the office staff if your child has special medical needs or problems. Our medication policy, including Request to Dispense Medication forms are on the school website.

For children with severe allergies or specific medical conditions, parents must complete an ASCIA Action Plan. Students are identified to the staff for their safety and the staff undergo regular first aid courses to address the medical needs of our children.

If your child has a case of Head Lice please inform the front office and treat the child.

Periods of Exclusion from School for Children with Infectious Diseases

The Public Health regulations require children with infectious diseases be excluded from school for the periods stipulated below:

- **Chicken Pox**
  Exclude until recovered or for at least 5 days after the eruption first appears AND all blisters are dry AND the person is systemically well.

- **Conjunctivitis**
  Exclude until discharge from eyes ceases.

- **Diarrhoea**
  Exclude until diarrhoea ceases.

- **Hepatitis A**
  Exclude for at least 7 days after the onset of jaundice and return to school on the advice of a medical practitioner.

*continued...*
Impetigo  Exclude until appropriate treatment has commenced and sores on exposed surface are covered with a watertight dressing.

Measles  Exclude for at least 4 days after the appearance of the rash.

Mumps  Exclude for at least 9 days after the onset of symptoms.

Ringworm  Exclude until the day after treatment has commenced.

Rubella  Exclude until recovered or for at least 4 days after rash.

Whooping Cough (pertussis)  Exclude for at least 21 days from start of cough, or for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment.


8.8 Car Park

The school’s main concern with the car park is the safety of students and all parents are therefore requested to drive carefully and courteously. Please note the signs that indicate direction and instructions.

In the morning cars are able to park on the netball court. Parents are requested to park within line markings. When using the drive-through area, drive along the large hedge and stop against the kerb to allow your child/children to alight safely from the kerb side of the car.

The crossings are supervised by teachers and we ask that everyone observes their directions to ensure the safety of all children. Please use the crossings to reach the school and walk at all times in the car areas. Morning assembly for all grades is held on the stage in the main playground.

In the afternoon all students walk with their teacher to the stage. Parents who park in the car park can collect their children from the stage and walk them across the supervised crossings into the car park. Children who are not collected by their parents are dispersed as walkers, riders, or drive through and make their way home or to the designated supervised area accordingly.

The crossings are supervised and controlled by teachers and we ask that everyone watches and observes their directions. Patience and thoughtfulness are the keys to safe driving in the school grounds.

The Staff Car Park should not be used for picking up or dropping off students.

On severe wet weather days the children will wait in the hall and all parents are asked to park and walk and collect their child/children from there.
8.9 School Fees

The Catholic Education Commission is responsible for setting the tuition and building levy each year. The School Community Council sets the school levies, which cover the following costs:

**Tuition Fees:** This is used to pay administration costs for all systemic schools.

**Building Fund:** This is paid at the school of the eldest child in the systemic system. The fund is used for the maintenance of all systemic schools.

**St Thomas Levy:** This payment goes towards expenditure in the classroom and our services e.g. electricity, gas, water, cleaning, classroom consumables and general administration costs.

**Activities Levy:** All local excursions, performances, dance program, gym program, swimming program and Year 5/6 sport program. This is monitored closely to ensure that the levy is used each year to provide educational and interesting experiences for the children.

**Information Technology Levy:** Purchasing, replacement and maintenance of hardware and learning technologies, along with the costs of software licensing, internet fees etc.

**Council Levy:** This levy replaces all fundraising except for the Annual Parish/School Fete. The School Community Council as representative of parents liaises with the staff to use these funds to enhance the learning of our students, replace and purchase resources and/or maintain and create an attractive and safe school environment.

Accounts are sent out in the second week of each term with the due date of four weeks. Fees can be paid by cash, cheque, direct debit, Bpay, EFTPOS or credit card and regular instalments are accepted.

### 2016 SCHOOL FEES

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<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Tuition Fee</th>
<th>School Levy</th>
<th>Building Fund</th>
<th>IT Levy</th>
<th>Council Levy</th>
<th>Activity Levy</th>
<th>Total per Term</th>
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## 9. School Services

### 9.1 Canteen

The Canteen is open Thursday and Fridays to provide lunch and morning recess for the children and staff. The menu is in line with the Fresh Taste initiative, which ensures healthy nutritious food for the children. A manager with volunteer parents and friends operates the Canteen. All parents are invited to volunteer their assistance. Your support is always needed and will help you to meet the children and other parents. Parents can use the online system for ordering lunches.

### 9.2 School Uniform (Clothing Pool)

The school clothing pool usually has a supply of good used clothing and is open on the same days as the canteen, Thursday and Friday. New clothing is available at the local schoolwear shops located in the major shopping area in Tuggeranong.

Hats may also be purchased from the Canteen or Front Office.

### 9.3 Before and After School Care (CAST)

Before and after school care is available at St Thomas the Apostle. This care is provided by Communities@Work School Age Care and is located on school grounds.

Enrolment information and packs for before and after school care can be obtained from the Communities@Work website at www.commsatwork.org.au or by phoning Communities@Work on (02) 6293 6500.
# St Thomas the Apostle School Uniform

## GIRLS SUMMER
- **Dress** Catholic Primary Uniform or Shorts Royal Blue with Polo Shirt Sky Blue
- **Sloppy Joe** Maroon or Polar Fleece
- **Socks** Plain white
- **Shoes** Black
- **Sandals** Brown or Black
- Hair accessories to match uniform

## GIRLS SPORT
- **Skirt** Royal Blue pleated or Shorts Royal Blue St Thomas style shorts
- **Polo Shirt** St Thomas sport shirt with logo
- **Socks** Plain white
- **Sports shoes** Predominately White
- **Tracksuit** Royal Blue Tracksuit or Royal Blue Polar Fleece

## GIRLS WINTER
- **Slacks** Navy or Pinafore Catholic Primary with Shirt Light blue with Peter Pan collar or Skivvy Light Blue
- **Parka** Navy
- **Shoes** Black
- **Socks** Plain white
- **Tights** Navy
- **Cardigan** Maroon with logo or Sloppy Joe Maroon
- **Polar Fleece** Maroon
- Hair accessories to match uniform

## BOYS SUMMER
- **Shorts** Navy
- **Polo Shirt** Plain Sky Blue
- **Socks** Plain Navy
- **Shoes** Black (no Black runners)
- **Sandals** Brown or Black
- **Sloppy Joe** Maroon V neck jumper

## BOYS SPORT
- **Shorts** Royal Blue poly cotton or rugby knit shorts
- **Polo Shirt** St Thomas sport shirt with logo
- **Socks** Plain White
- **Sports shoes** Predominately White
- **Tracksuit** Royal Blue Tracksuit Royal Blue Polar Fleece

## BOYS WINTER
- **Trousers** Navy
- **Shirt** Light Blue with tie or Skivvy Light Blue
- **Sloppy Joe** Maroon
- **Jacket/Parka** Maroon
- **Tie** St Thomas the Apostle
- **Socks** Navy
- **Shoes** Black

## SCHOOL HATS
- Royal Blue Legionnaire or Broad brimmed Summer and Winter
- Royal Blue Beanie – Winter
- Bucket – Summer and Winter
10. Beginning School

It is a big change for a five year old to pass from the intimacy of the family circle to school, even if he/she has attended pre-school. Here are some practical ways in which you can help this transition.

- Buy clothing that is easy to fasten.
- Ensure that all articles brought to school (shoes, hat, jumper, bag, books, lunch box etc) are marked clearly in a prominent place with the child’s christian name and surname.

Teach your child to:

- Carry his/her school bag.
- Tie shoelaces, do up buttons, put on and take off outer clothing without help.
- Recognise his/her name among other names.
- Repeat his/her name and address.
- Use his/her handkerchief and put it away when not in use.
- Put away toys, books etc. after use.
- Wash his/her hands and flush the toilet unassisted.
- Know how he/she goes home after school.
- Open and close his/her school bag.
- Listen to stories, look at pictures and talk about them.
- Greet teachers and companions by title and name.

However, your child’s greatest asset is the development of a measure of independence. While we endeavour to provide a happy, safe and nurturing environment please remember that the school does not replace the home. As a school community we value your support and believe that working together we can achieve the best social, emotional and educational outcomes for all children.