



Starting School at St Mary's Manly



St Mary's is a small school where relationships are valued and nurtured. Students, parents and staff have positive, collaborative relationships which enables a strong culture of partnership and friendship. Students have such positive role modelling in their social development and this is reflected in their interactions with each other and staff.

What makes St Mary's special?

We firmly believe in providing our boys and girls with an innovative and inspirational education from Kindergarten through to Year 6. We offer:

- A balanced curriculum — encouraging real problem solving and creativity
- Opportunities for life long learning focusing on skills such as positive communication, team work and a growth mindset.
- Authentic pastoral care — St Mary's is a 'Be You' School which supports the values of respect, compassion, trust, courage, honesty, service and hope.
- Effective Positive Behaviours for Learning Program
- Genuine opportunities for parent participation. Parent voice is valued.
- A strong sense of social justice and community outreach enabling a strong sense of 'other'.
- A range of modern technologies to integrate into our learning and teaching methods for 21st century learning
- An extensive student leadership program which develops outstanding senior role models who care, nurture and role model to younger students.
- A broad selection of extra curricular activities
- Before & after school care on site with carers that are connected to the school



If my child is turning 5 next year is it possible to send them to school?

Students are able to start school as long as they turn 5 by 31st July that year. There are considerations that parents should think about:

- Will your child be able to socially and emotionally cope with the new demands and routine of the school environment?
- Your child may be the youngest or one of the youngest with the majority of students being up to 18mths older.
- Feedback about school readiness can come from the Pre-school. Have you talked to them yet?
- As your child gets older and competes in sport, they will always be placed in their 'age group' not their class group. This is the practice for community sports as well.

Frequently Asked Questions - Answered

DO I NEED TO BE CATHOLIC?

No - children whose families express an understanding of and commitment to the education and values based life of the school are welcome.

IS THERE USUALLY AN EQUAL SPREAD OF BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE CLASS?

Currently, the spread of students in most classes is fairly even. The school adheres to the Diocesan Enrolment Policy and processes and this does not include offers of enrolment based on gender.



Our FREE inclusive Playgroup supports School Readiness. Find out more on our website.



As a parent, how can I be involved with the school?

The school welcomes parent engagement! Parents are invited to attend the Masses, liturgies, and assemblies, as well as many events. We often require parent helpers for the classroom, activities, library and excursions. Additionally, we have a supportive Parent Engagement Network who represent the classes, organise social gatherings and keep parents informed about what's happening at school.

How many students are in each class?

On average the class sizes are 23-26 students.

- This number supports the achievement of student outcomes. The teachers at St Mary's are exceptional practitioners and committed to their student's learning and wellbeing.

- In Kindergarten and Year 1 any class over 27 attracts support in the form of either extra teacher days or a teacher's aide, depending on how that individual teacher chooses to use the allocation. In the case of the use of another teacher, it would be to take the class so that the classroom teacher can assess students or time to prepare learning experiences.

- In the form of a teacher's aide, this may be regular daily assistance, so that the teacher has an extra pair of hands to assist in the practical management of the class. The aide may be asked to monitor independent learners whilst the teacher takes a small group, or they may be asked to work with a small group.

Do you provide a teacher's aide for large classes?

Yes- From Year 2 to 6 classes with over 30 students also attract similar time as above.





What subjects are taught?

The New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) determines the syllabus for students. We are required to teach to outcomes in 7 Key Learning Areas (KLA):

- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Human Society and its Environment (History/Geography)
- Creative Arts
- Religious Education
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

Each KLA is given an allocated percentage of time aligned with the New South Wales Education Standards Authority (NESA) guidelines. St Mary's approaches the teaching of these KLAs through the school's unique Learning Framework.

The St Mary's Learning Framework guides staff to develop learning pathways to address overarching concepts that are drawn from the syllabuses.

Student engagement in authentic learning experiences are informed by student voice, driving inquiry teaming to be purposeful and relevant in the context of their environment.

IS LANGUAGE TAUGHT AT SCHOOL?

Yes, Japanese in Years 3-6. There are also extra-curricular options for French, Spanish, Mandarin and German.



Do you have an Anti Bullying policy and Behaviour Policy?

We have Pastoral Care & Student Wellbeing Guidelines, which also include Behaviour Management Support and Anti Bullying Guidelines. These guidelines promote a positive behaviour for learning approach that supports our underpinning principle of Respect for others, self and the environment.

Students take responsibility for their behaviour and are skilled with the language and actions to engage in developing and maintaining positive relationships in their learning environment.

They are reminded of appropriate behaviour and there is a process to address inappropriate and unsafe behaviour. Our goal at St Mary's is to ensure all students are safe and happy.





How is Learning Support & Extension delivered?

All students learn differently and have varying learning needs.

Support for learning:

- Various forms of assessment and screening are conducted to build a profile of each student
- Teachers use this data to shape the learning experiences that will enable students to develop specific skills to achieve outcomes.
- Differentiation is about developing learning experiences that suit various learning needs. Tasks may be modified or extended to enable students to achieve successful learning outcomes.
- Support must ensure the dignity of every student and align with what is happening in the classroom. This usually consists of small group intervention. In a mainstream school, support is about a gradual release of responsibility, which means that scaffolds and support are slowly reduced as students move up the grades to ensure they develop skills that will ensure independent learning and prepare them for High School
- Parents are informed if their child requires support and this intervention is reported on.



Extension Program

At St Mary's we believe in enrichment for all, extension for some.

• In the same way as support, some students require tasks that will extend them beyond their stage and age level. All students are entitled to participate in enriching learning experiences, some with support and others with extension.

• As with support, various data is collected from work samples, standardised assessments and observations that inform teachers as to where to extend their students.





WHAT ARE THE SCHOOL FEES REQUIRED?

Fees are provided ahead of each school year and cover:

- Tuition Fee
- School Resource Fee
- Building Levy

They can be found on our website under the 'Enrol' tab.

No student will ever be denied a Catholic education.

Fee relief under normal circumstances is on a case by case basis and parents are encouraged to talk to the principal to support them with a process of application to the Catholic Schools Office.

DO YOU HAVE BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL CARE?

Yes! We offer an on-site program, with a long-standing team who complement the ethos of the school. The program includes only St Mary's students. Before School Care starts at 7,15am and After School Care goes until 6pm.



What sport is offered?

Each class has an hour of PE each week with a specialist PE teacher.

- The whole school participates in Swimming, Athletics and Cross Country carnivals.
- Students who are 8 years and over can qualify to progress to the Cluster, Diocesan and State carnivals.

- All students in Years 3 to 6 participate in skill development clinics each term -
Term 1 - Soccer with Sydney FC and Cricket with Cricket NSW
Term 2 - Eagle Tag with NRL
Term 3 - Netball and AFL

At the end of these terms, all students participate in the Northern Beaches Catholic Schools gala days

- Term 4 - Students are invited to also participate in gala days for Basketball, Hockey & Tennis

- Other out of area competitions are also attended by selected students - Netball, NRL, softball, & Rugby Union and more.





Will my child have a chance to visit school again before they start?

Typically, the process of enrolment at St Mary's includes;

- Playgroup each term: The time and day changes each term. You can find details on our website under the 'School Community' tab. Children can play and parents can have a coffee and get to know other families in the school. They'll also have the chance to take part in our gentle, specialised 'school readiness' program.
- A before-school screener in June: Students visit the school for this.
- In October, students attend an Orientation morning where they are with their class and participate in a variety of activities with a team of teachers. They also have time with the Year 5 students who will be their buddy.
- In Nov/Dec, students attend 'Taste of Big School' sessions, usually 1.5hrs in the classroom, getting used to routines.
- Just before school starts, students come in for a one-hour assessment with their teacher in their classroom.



CONTACT US:

If you'd like a tour, to ask about enrolment or have any question at all, please get in touch.

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How does St Mary's compare to the State and Independent Primary schools?

We are proud to say our school is consistently ranked in the Top 10 best performing schools on the Northern Beaches.

The school has a unique Learning Framework that supports the teaching of skills through an inquiry approach to learning, with students taking the lead in their context, and the teacher facilitating and enabling.

Data from student achievements has shown that the school's framework has contributed to increased results across the school.

The transition to High School Program includes:

- Timetables
- Assignments
- Exams

Student Leadership Program consists of:

- Year 6 Leaders
- Year 5 Buddy Program
- K to 6 SRC Representatives
- A Shared leadership approach to how we operate a school with student voice, informing the change in practice and the learning environment.
- Each senior leadership team has a staff mentor.

We are a Catholic School and our way of being is modelled on the teachings of Jesus and how he taught us to live in service to others.

