



Welcome to the senior years



At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Manly, the senior years are a time of transformation. As students move through Years 4 to 6, they are invited to grow, not just academically, but emotionally, socially and spiritually. This is where character is shaped, confidence is built, and leadership is lived. In a community that values belonging, kindness and courage, every child is supported to become their best self. We walk this journey together with families, teachers and peers ensuring each student feels known, empowered and ready for the future. At St Mary's, we don't just prepare students for high school, we prepare them for life.

Leading with Heart, Purpose and Confidence

Leadership at St Mary's isn't reserved for a select few, it's nurtured in every student. In their senior years, children are encouraged to step forward, speak up, and serve others with integrity and compassion. Whether they're leading assemblies, mentoring younger students, representing their peers, or contributing to community initiatives, our Year 5 & 6 students discover that true leadership begins

with self-awareness and a desire to make a positive impact. We encourage our students to explore and develop their own personal capabilities. We foster a culture where students feel safe to take risks, grow through challenges, and celebrate their strengths. Through guided opportunities and reflective practice, they build the confidence to lead with empathy, the resilience to persevere, and the courage to be their best selves—inside and outside the classroom.

What Sets Our Senior Experience Apart

Our senior years are thoughtfully designed to nurture the whole child. Through a carefully woven journey of programs and experiences, students build confidence, develop leadership skills, and grow into capable, compassionate young people.





Together, these experiences create a senior journey that is rich in purpose, grounded in values, and filled with opportunities for every child to shine and ‘Be Your Best Self Here’

Year 4 – Foundations of Belonging

- Better Buddies Program Training: In partnership with the Alannah & Madeline Foundation, students begin their training, developing empathy, inclusion, and peer support by connecting with younger students. Setting the standard, students learn to show care and compassion, this is where ‘a sense of other’ is nurtured.
- Leadership Awareness: Early exposure to responsibility and role-modelling.
- St Mary’s Digital Safety Bootcamp K-6 - Using technology responsibly & understanding the School Internet Agreement.

Year 5 – Stepping into Leadership

- Better Buddies Program: Strengthens relationships and reinforces values of kindness and respect, based on positive role modelling.
- Leadership Development: A comprehensive program that assists in building greater awareness of each child’s personal capabilities - team building, communication, and service including an overnight leadership camp.
- Live Life to the Full Program: A parent-child values-based initiative promoting respectful relationships and positive life choices.
- St Mary’s Digital Safety Bootcamp K-6 - Staying safe online and digital citizenship, Privacy and reporting and Cyber Bulling.

Year 6 – Leading with Purpose

Senior Leaders Program: Empowers students to lead with confidence, empathy, and integrity in their successful student leadership teams.

- St Mary’s Digital Safety Bootcamp K-6: Being an e-safe kid, the Social Media Ban and AI in the classroom.
- Transition to Highschool Program (Harrison Riedel Foundation): A transition to high school initiative that supports youth mental health and wellbeing through peer support and help-seeking strategies. This includes an overnight transition to high school camp.
- Careers Discovery Program: Inspires curiosity about future pathways fostering hope and a confident outlook about the future.
- Peer Support Program: Senior students lead structured sessions with younger peers, promoting connection and community.
- Live Life to the Full Program: Deepens emotional intelligence and resilience including consent education.
- Morning Tea & Lunch Clubs: Year 6 leaders run student-led clubs that foster connection, creativity and fun across the school.
- Playgroups: Year 6 leadership teams assist with playgroup for preschoolers each term. Role modelling to future St Mary’s students prior to them starting school and developing nurturing connections with families.



Senior Curriculum: Personalised Learning with Purpose

In Years 5 and 6, students benefit from a seamless learning journey guided by passionate educators who know them well. With a strong focus on individual needs, we offer tailored academic support and enrichment opportunities, ensuring every child is challenged, supported and prepared for high school. There's no steep learning curve here. Our teachers build on years of connection and understanding, structuring learning around each student's goals. Strong partnerships with St Paul's College, Manly and neighbouring high schools, further supports a smooth transition into Year 7. Senior students also enjoy public speaking competitions and debating skills development, Maths Challenge and Olympiad programs, rich extracurriculars in Drama, Dance, Languages, Chess, Public Speaking. We also offer representative sports opportunities and inter-school competitions: Students can trial for and participate in local, regional, state and national-level sporting events across a range of disciplines.

The Power of Co-Ed Primary Education

At St Mary's School Manly, students grow together in respect, empathy and equality, values that shape confident, compassionate learners. Mixed classrooms foster inclusive relationships and diverse thinking, while senior students model leadership, with nurturing heart and kindness towards others. Remaining through to Year 6 gives children stability during key developmental years, avoiding early transitions and allowing them to thrive before high school, developing positive attitudes and values they will help shape who they are as adults of tomorrow.



Pathways to High Schools

Whilst our senior students enter a variety of high schools, St Mary's enjoys a strong and collaborative relationship with many of our feeder high schools, particularly our local system pathway to St Paul's College Manly, which offers students a clear and supported pathway into high school. Through mentoring programs, shared initiatives, and transition support, our senior students gain early exposure to the high school environment while remaining grounded in the care of their primary school community. This partnership ensures that students feel confident and prepared for the next step, with familiar faces and values that align across both schools. Whether through leadership coaching, academic enrichment, or shared community events, the connection to St Paul's is an example of how we help our students move forward with clarity and excitement.



Senior Zone: Independence, Leadership and Lasting Memories

Our dedicated Senior Zone for Years 5 and 6 offers a bespoke learning space designed to foster independence, collaboration and confidence. With breakout areas and flexible group settings, students experience a gentle transition toward high school while remaining in a familiar, nurturing environment.

Students engage in eight leadership groups mentored by staff and take part in programs that build empathy and responsibility, like Better Buddies, Peer Support, and leading school assemblies and playgroups. Year 6 leaders also run morning tea and lunch clubs, creating inclusive spaces for students to connect, explore interests and build friendships.

To support focus, wellbeing and respectful digital habits, all personal technology, including phones and smart watches must be handed in to the office each morning and collected after the final bell. This routine helps students stay present, engaged and connected throughout the school day.

Year 6 culminates in a Graduation celebration that honours each child's journey, marking the end of their primary years with pride, joy and a sense of belonging that lasts well beyond the classroom.

Looking Ahead with Hope and Confidence

At St Mary's, we believe the final years of primary school should be filled with purpose, connection and joy. As your child grows into their best self, guided by strong values, supported by caring teachers, and surrounded by a vibrant community they gain more than just academic readiness. They build character, confidence and a deep sense of belonging. With you by their side and our team behind them, they step into high school not only prepared but empowered. The journey may begin here, but its impact lasts a lifetime.

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