

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do we have a Playgroup?

Playgroup is held on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 am - 10:30 am during school terms. There are no booking requirements, and it's a gold coin donation to attend.

Do we have a Kindergarten onsite?

No, and whilst we don't recommend any one kindy over another, we do have a good relationship with the kindy next door (Wynn Vale Community House Kindergarten). Many children attending this kindy do go on to start at our school.

We also assist families with walking children who attend this kindy to our Curious Xavier's program.

Do we have a waiting list?

In some year levels, yes.

Due to exceptionally high demand for Reception enrolments, applications should be submitted by the time your child has turned TWO years of age (including siblings of existing students). If, however, the enrolment is left closer to a child's school commencement age, we cannot guarantee a place.

Our Vision

Inspiring a community of innovators



Service



Compassion



Respect

What makes us unique?

Our environment; Catholic Identity; Community

Do we have a mid-year intake for Reception?

Yes. Children turning 5 between 1st May and 31st October are eligible to start school in the mid-year intake (Term 3).

What are the benefits of a mid-year Reception entry for children that are eligible?

Starting your child mid-year means that they will complete six terms in Reception. This assists children to successfully transition from their early years setting into the school setting.

Experience has shown us that this additional time can be of great assistance, particularly for those children that are anxious or appear not ready for school. During this period, they gain confidence in the school surroundings, build valuable and supportive relationships with both teachers and children in their cohort, and experience inquiry and play based learning that develops their curiosity and thinking skills.

For families with children eligible to start in the mid-year intake, at present, there are no school fees charged for their first two terms at school, i.e. Terms 3 and 4.

Do we have a mid-year intake for Years 1 – 6?

Provided our classes are not at capacity, we are able to accommodate entry into other year levels throughout the year.

What is our Bullying Policy?

At St Francis we believe in the Restorative Practice approach. Restorative Practice supports the growth of the child, their dignity, uniqueness, and their relationship with others.

All students at the school are part of The Resilience Project, which aims to teach positive mental health strategies to help people become happier and more resilient. The three focus principles of The Resilience Project are Gratitude, Empathy and Mindfulness. With our Restorative Practice approach, together with The Resilience Project, our aim is to reduce behaviours that cause harm to others.

We recognise that bullying can and does occur, and as with other behaviour concerns, we work through our Restorative Practices Procedure. A copy of our Restorative Practices Procedure document is available on our school website.

How do we support children's strengths / interests?

We recognise and respect that each child is an individual. Teachers encourage Welcome Chats with families in the early stages of a child's commencement at school, and this is of considerable assistance in getting to know both your child and family. Welcome Chats are also offered to other year levels at the start of each academic year.

As well, at the beginning of each school year, our teachers' focus is not on students learning the curriculum, but on building relationships and getting to know each child in their class. This knowledge is then transferred to the learning environment to stimulate everyone's successful engagement in the curriculum.

Curriculum and focus areas in a child's schooling?

All schools must follow the Australian Curriculum. Information can be found on the ACARA website: <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/>

At St Francis, we believe that if children are happy and comfortable in their environment, then this gives them the best opportunity at being a successful learner. We believe in a holistic education and seek to engage all aspects of the learner, where each individual finds their identity, meaning and purpose through their connections.

We seek to Inspire a Community of Innovators through our 4 Learning Principles, that are at the core of all our learning: Connections (Engaging in meaningful relationships); Collaboration (Working together); Creativity (Learning through imagination); Inquiry (Searching for meaning). We believe it is of paramount importance that children understand what they are learning and why, and each lesson is structured with a learning intention.

How do we communicate concerns to parents?

Teachers or a member our leadership team will phone or email you if there is a concern. We pride ourselves on our communication with families. At SFX a restorative approach is used when working with students and families.

What forms of general communication does the school use?

We have various method of communication as follows: Email; School e-News; Seesaw; MS Teams; Facebook; Instagram; SMS.

How do we cater for children with additional needs? What support systems / intervention programs do we use?

Children that require additional support are identified through various diagnostic tests. The data informs us best teaching practice for each individual child.

If children are below the benchmark, they will receive extra assistance. The school has a number of educators who work to support teachers with children needing help and/or modified curriculum. Depending on children's needs, this can occur within the classroom setting, in small groups, or one-on-one support.

We have various programs / interventions in place to assist children, dependant on their needs: Quicksmart; Oral Languages; Fine/Gross Motor programs; Sensory Room; Heggerty intensive group; Learning Assistance Program (LAP).

How do we cater for children that are "gifted"?

We have an extended literacy program, and there are also extension groups within each classroom.

What is our literacy program?

At St Francis, for children in Reception - Year 3 we use the "Heggerty" program. The Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum provides students with consistent and repeated instruction, and this transfers to developing a student's decoding and encoding skills.

R-6 also does Sound-Write – a phonemic awareness program and we have a tier 3 intervention program called Playberry, which supports students with severe reading and spelling difficulties.

Explain our community, and what is our ethos?

We are an active community where parents are encouraged to join in and be part of their child's learning journey. Building community is paramount to all we do at SFX.

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School is a child-centred, future-focussed, and dynamic Catholic school. Our school is named after St Francis Xavier who believed in seeing "God in all things". In partnership with the community and our unique environment, we flourish in a culture of learning.

We believe that children learn in a caring, accepting environment. We believe that when children are encouraged and supported, they will experience success.

We believe that all children have a natural curiosity and desire to learn, and that this should be nurtured.

We believe that education should be directed toward preparing children for the future so they can effectively contribute and constructively change the society in which they live. Because we believe in providing the best education for your child, our direction is clear: we are aware of the need to be constantly evolving to meet the needs of our students, staff, and parents. Our school values success and relationships that are based on trust, respect, and cooperation.

Do children have to be baptised Catholic to come to St Francis?

Whilst we are a Catholic parish school, there is no requirement to be baptised to come to this school. We welcome all families and respect everyone's choice in this regard. Of the highest importance to us is that all are treated with respect and kindness, and it is these values that we wish to instil in the children in our care.

How much religion is taught?

We are a Catholic parish school, and therefore, children are involved in daily prayer as well as liturgies and masses throughout the year. Religion by way of values and morals is intertwined throughout the curriculum and daily life of our school, and Religion lessons occur three times a week.

Do children receive their sacraments at school?

Children receive their sacraments at church but are supported through the school. We work closely with St David's Parish and Para Hills/Modbury Parish when children are preparing to receive their sacraments.

Do we have Out of School Hours Care / Vacation Care? What are the fees?

Both OSHC and Vacation Care are available. Before school care commences at 7:15am, and after school care concludes at 6:00pm. Fees are available by contacting the service on 8251 9560.

Is Out of School Hours Care available for pre-schoolers who attend Wynn Vale Community House Kindergarten?

OSHC is available for pre-schoolers who attend Wynn Vale Community House Kindergarten.

What is our relationship with Gleeson?

We have an excellent relationship with Gleeson College, working closely to ensure a smooth transition for our students who go on to attend Gleeson for their secondary schooling. Whilst the vast majority of students from St Francis do attend Gleeson College for their secondary education, there are some children who go on to other secondary options both within and out of the Catholic system.

What extracurricular activities do we offer?

Music: We have several ensemble and performance groups that children can be a part of. Private music tutoring, held here at the school, is also available on a user-pays basis. Full details can be accessed via the school website.

After School Sport: We have several after school sports teams participating in a variety of sports. Full details can be obtained from the school website.

In addition, we are involved in numerous Catholic and SAPSASA carnivals. We also have clinics onsite for children in Reception – Year 2, where they can learn how to play a particular sport, e.g., netball, soccer, football, tennis, and more.