



Change is good, but some things never change!

Term 1 Week 1 2026

Faith Focus

In our opening chapel on Tuesday, I spoke about starting a new year, the excitement that goes along with it, the opportunities that await us and the big plans we may have. I shared some of the big plans I had going into this year, specifically around my home, where I have started renovating a bathroom. Unfortunately, the result so far has fallen well short of the dream.



Dream



Reality

I shared with students that we all want 2026 to be a great year but things are not always going to go the way we would like. There will be challenges, problems and frustrations and we will make mistakes and get things wrong. We talked about the way God can make something good come from our problems or mistakes and we reflected on a couple of reassuring verses:

"See, I am making all things new." - Revelation 21:5

"I know what I'm doing. I have it all planned out—plans to take care of you, not leave you, plans to give you the future you hope for." - Jeremiah 29:11

Andrew Boesch

Principal Ponderings

Hello and welcome back to a new year at St Mark's. My name is Andrew Boesch (pronounced Bush). I was here at St Mark's for a term in 2025 and it is an absolute pleasure and privilege to be back. I have already enjoyed reconnecting with staff, students, parents and friends, as people have arrived back at school, and I am looking forward to meeting more of you as the term progresses.

We have had a wonderful start to 2026. Our staff spent time in the week before students returned, looking at how we can create a calm, positive environment for our students and their families. It has been really pleasing to see the way students have settled back into school after the break and the way students who are new to St Mark's have settled into their new environment. Our Foundation classes have had a really successful couple of days transitioning into school life. I want to say a big thank you to all of our staff for the effort, care and time they have put into helping things run smoothly as students have returned, and thank you to our families for working with us to help the year begin on a really positive note.

I want to thank you for welcoming me back so warmly. I'm excited about what 2026 will bring and excited about getting to know the St Mark's community better.

Andrew Boesch
Principal

Reminder - Car Park

Just a reminder about car parks in the mornings and afternoons. In the interests of safety, smooth operations and keeping our neighbours happy, please follow the directions on the signs for entering, leaving, parking and pickups. If there are any issues or concerns arising from our car park, or any questions about procedures, please pass these on to our office staff.

A new start to the school year

On Tuesday we welcomed back our returning students, and Wednesday had our new Foundations start. It was wonderful to see friends and families reconnect with other students and teachers. Students have spent the last few days setting learning expectations and getting to know their learning spaces.



School life

Opening Chapel

We welcomed the start of the school year with our Opening Chapel service led by Mr Boesch who spoke with excitement for the year ahead, and reminding us that even if things don't always go the way we want, God can take the things that go wrong and make something good from them.



P&F Update

Our dedicated Parents and Friends Association (P&F) runs fundraising and social events to raise valuable funds for our students, and provide exciting activities for our school and the wider community.

P&F Meeting

The first P&F meeting will be next Tues, 3 Feb at 6:30pm in the staffroom.

Meet & Greet

P&F will be hosting a free sausage BBQ at the Meet & Greet next Thurs, 5 Feb. Gluten Free and vegan options will be available

Meeting our Buddies!

One of the highlights our learners often talk about is spending time with their Buddy. In previous years, this program has involved our Foundations, Year 1s, Year 5s and Year 6s. In 2026 we are excited to share that we will all have buddies!

The Buddy Class Program is based on the rationale that older students, when buddied with younger students, can provide support and role modelling that benefits all students. This reciprocal relationship encourages leadership and responsibility in our Year 5 and 6 students, while providing guidance and a stronger sense of security for our Foundation and Year 1 students. Additionally, our Buddy Class Program enables vertical grouping for our Years 2 – 4 students, expanding their connections and overall sense of belonging.

Over the next week our learners will be meeting up with their Buddies for the first time. Keep an eye out for a drawing or interview coming home that was created during Buddy Time.

Eat, Meet, & Greet

Our Eat, Meet and Greet night will be held next Thursday, 5th February. The evening will begin with a sausage sizzle at 5:30pm, before moving to classrooms, to meet your child's classroom teacher, and taking the opportunity to visit other learning spaces in the school.

The evening's schedule will be as follows:

- 5:30–6:30pm: Sausage sizzle
- 6:00–7:00pm: Open school for families to visit our learning spaces, including our hall (PE), music room and library. Teachers will be available in classrooms and other learning spaces so you can meet them, chat and ask questions about the year ahead.

Please be aware that supervision of students on the night will be the responsibility of parents and caregivers.

School life

Welcoming our new Foundations

Foundation students have had a wonderful start to their schooling years. They've met teachers, started writing their names, Performing Arts and PE, and are learning the different bells and having lots of fun at recess and lunchtimes. Foundation Driver (FD) have also met with Lucas today which was very exciting.



Private Music Lessons

St Mark's engages private instrumental music tutors who attend the site to offer weekly lessons, during school time, for interested students in Year 3 and above. Instruments include flute, trumpet, clarinet, saxophone, violin, cello, guitar, bass, piano and drums.

If your child is interested in learning an instrument, please contact our Music Coordinator, Miss Lyall for further information (elyall@stmarks.sa.edu.au) or request an enrolment form at the front office.

School life

Premiers Reading Challenge

Our school has been an avid supporter of the Premiers Reading Challenge since it began over 20 yrs ago! To complete the challenge students have approximately 9 months to read 12 books. Eight of these books must be from the Readers Challenge list and 4 books are FREE CHOICE.

There are books for different year levels. In our Library they are identified: F-Year 2 Orange dot, Year 3-5 Green dot and Year 6 Blue dot. Children in Foundation – Year 2 may have a parent read the books TO the children but older children are encouraged to read the books themselves.

Every time a book is read the title and author should be recorded on the Student Reading Record sheet. For younger students this sheet will be at the back of their Communication books. Older students may have them in their homework books (check with your child).

In the first year of the Challenge students receive a Certificate of participation. Every year after that the children will receive a medal! It is always a day of great excitement when all the medals are handed out. Please encourage your children to participate in the challenge.



SRC Brick Club

In 2026 the SRC will be continuing 'Brick Club' in the Library at lunchtimes. It's a great time to sit with peers and work on a creative build!

We really appreciate any donations of Lego or compatible bricks that you no longer use. We are also keen to include some of the 'bricks and pieces' that can be collected with your supermarket shop over the next month or so. Please drop any donations into the Front Office. Thank you

HILLS/BARKER SWIMMING (Year 4-6)

Previously known as the Courier Cup, the HILLS/BARKER District Swimming event is set to take place at the new Summit Aquatic Centre for the first time in 2026. A variety of schools from across the Adelaide Hills gather to participate.

St Mark's has a proud history of being involved and the school team is selected based on results of two trials held before school on the dates below. **If attending the trials, you will need to bring your student to the Summit Aquatic Centre, as well as transport them to school after the trials have concluded.**

- **Tuesday 3rd of February 7.20am- 8.20am**
- **Tuesday 10th of February 7.20am- 8.20am**

Students can race in three individual races, plus a relay/s.

- Freestyle
- Backstroke
- Breaststroke
- Butterfly

Please note (new in 2026) that students will need to be able to swim their chosen stroke for 50 metres, two laps of the Aquatic Centre pool, up and back.

Students race in the following age groups:

- 10 Years- Born in 2016
- 11 Years- Born in 2015
- 12 Years- Born in 2014

Unfortunately, if Year 4 students are born in 2017, they will be unable to participate until next year (SAPSASA rule).

If you have further questions about the trials, please contact Mr. Scott.

TERM 1 2026

WEEK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Regular events	Mainly Music 9.30 - 11.00am <i>Church</i>	Whole School Assembly (odd weeks) 2.40pm	Band 8.20-9.15am Lunch Orders	Choir 1.15-1.45pm <i>Hall</i>	Whole School Chapel 9.00am <i>Hall</i>
1	Jan 26 Public Holiday	Jan 27 School Term Starts Years 1-6 Opening Chapel 9.15pm - <i>Hall</i>	Jan 28 Foundations begin	Jan 29	Jan 30
2	Feb 2	Feb 3 P&F Meeting	Feb 4	Feb 5 Eat, Meet, Greet 5.30-7pm	Feb 6 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
3	Feb 9	Feb 10 Whole School Assembly 2.40pm - <i>Hall</i>	Feb 11	Feb 12	Feb 13 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
4	Feb 16	Feb 17	Feb 18	Feb 19	Feb 20 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
5	Feb 23	Feb 24 Whole School Assembly 2.40pm - <i>Hall</i> NAPLAN CPT	Feb 25	Feb 26 Hills/Barker Swimming	Feb 27 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
6	Mar 2	Mar 3	Mar 4 Year 5 Camp Port Hughes	Mar 5 Year 5 Camp Port Hughes	Mar 6 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i> Year 5 Camp Port Hughes
7	Mar 9 Public Holiday	Mar 10 Whole School Assembly 2.40pm - <i>Hall</i>	Mar 11 NAPLAN Commences	Mar 12 Harmony Day	Mar 13 Twilight Sports Day
8	Mar 16	Mar 17	Mar 18	Mar 19	Mar 20 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
9	Mar 23 NAPLAN Closes Year 4 Camp She Oak	Mar 24 Whole School Assembly 2.40pm - <i>Hall</i> Year 4 Camp She Oak	Mar 25 Year 4 Camp She Oak	Mar 26	Mar 27 Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i>
10	Mar 30 Learning Conversations	Mar 31	Apr 1 Learning Conversations	Apr 2	Apr 3 Good Friday
11	Apr 6 Easter Monday	Apr 7 Whole School Assembly 2.40pm - <i>Hall</i> Learning Conversations	Apr 8 MSP School Photos	Apr 9	Apr 10 Closing Chapel 9.00am - <i>Hall</i> Jam - Whole School Music Performance 1:45pm-3:00pm School Term Ends

Diary

February

Feb 3 - P&F Meeting - 6.30pm in the staffroom
 Feb 5 - Eat, Meet, & Greet - 5.30-7.00pm
 Feb 6 - Chapel - 9.00am
 Feb 10 - Assembly - 2.40pm
 Feb 13 - Chapel - 9.00am
 Feb 20 - Chapel - 9.00am
 Feb 24 - Assembly - 2.40pm
 Feb 26 - Hills/Barker Swimming
 Feb 27 - Chapel - 9.00am

Friday Chapel

Chapel is held every Friday at 9am in the Hall. We look forward to Cheryl Liebelt leading us in Chapel tomorrow.

Parents and friends are welcome to attend and join us in the staff room, before and after Chapel for coffee, tea, hot chocolate and biscuits!



YMCA OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA
OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE


- ▶ Before and after school care
- ▶ Quality educators
- ▶ Child led programs
- ▶ Art and crafts
- ▶ Cooking experiences
- ▶ Sporting activities
- ▶ Learn life skills
- ▶ Create long lasting friendships
- ▶ Vacation care with excursions and incursions

ENROL NOW

CHILDCARE SUBSIDY APPROVED

CONTACT US
 oshc@ymcasa.org.au
 08 8200 2516

the Y



FREE MAVS COME AND TRY

🏀 Eastern Mavericks – Free Come & Try Sessions 🏀

Is your child interested in basketball? New to the game or keen to give it a go? This is the perfect opportunity to experience the Mavericks environment.

Who it's for

- ✓ Suitable for beginners
- ✓ No experience needed
- ✓ Open to new players

Session Dates (all sessions run 12:00 – 1:30pm)

- U14s (born 2013–2014): 7 & 14 February 2026
- U10s (born 2017–2020): 21 & 28 February 2026
- U12s (born 2015–2016): 14 & 21 March 2026

📍 Venue

Mt Lofty Community Sports Centre
 99 Longwood Rd, Heathfield SA 5153

Cost

- ✓ Free for new players
- ✓ Free for Mavericks players who bring a non-Mavericks friend

👉 Otherwise, a gold coin donation applies

Coaching

All sessions are run by Division 1 & State Level Mavericks coaches, focusing on skill development, confidence, and fun in a supportive environment.

🕒 No limited spots – come along and give it a try!

👉 A great introduction to basketball and a chance to see what the Mavericks are all about.

You can just arrive and try, or register via link on The Eastern Mavericks Facebook page. Alternatively, you can email community@easternmavericks.com.au



CORNERSTONE COLLEGE
 Christ our Firm Foundation

Year 7 in 2028?
 Your future starts HERE

Meet our team and explore Cornerstone College at our College Information Evening

**Wednesday
 18 February
 5pm or 7pm**

REGISTER HERE TO ATTEND

YOUR Potential. YOUR Purpose. YOUR Place.