

Magis Matters

July 2026

As we come to the end of Term 2, I want to thank you all for the dedication you've shown in supporting our students during this busy time. From eisteddfods, sporting carnivals, assessments, immersions and everything in between, these are the moments that make memories. As we prepare to celebrate NAIDOC Week, I want to highlight in particular the release of our inaugural [Growing Strong Futures: Sydney Catholic Schools Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education report](#) and the [Archdiocese's Innovate Reconciliation Plan](#) — two key pieces of work that will guide us in the years ahead. I wish you and your families a safe, restful and well-deserved break.

Danielle Cronin, Executive Director



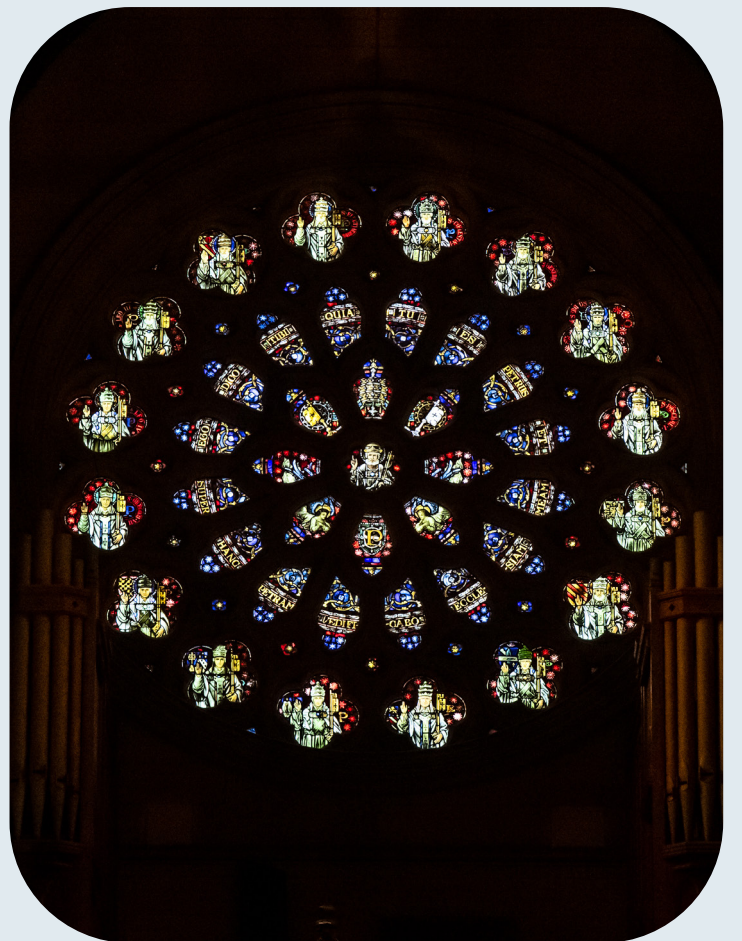
The story behind our refreshed identity

Above the main entrance of St Mary's Cathedral sits the southern rose window, a magnificent display of stained glass and the inspiration for the soon-to-be revealed Sydney Catholic Schools insignia.

The window tells a story of tradition and mission. At its centre stands St Peter holding the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven. Encircling St Peter are 16 popes who have followed in his footsteps, including four whose lives are closely connected to the Catholic story of Sydney, reminding us that Sydney's Catholic community is part of a much larger legacy of faith, leadership and service.

The rose window also speaks powerfully to our mission today. Light enters through the window and is transformed into colour, beauty and meaning. In much the same way, the faith we nurture in our schools is transformed in the lives of our students into wonder, wisdom and witness.

We look forward to revealing our refreshed look in Term 3.



Former SCS alumni drop by for special visits

SCS is proud to play a key role in the education and formation of current political leaders including the NSW Governor Margaret Beazley, Premier Chris Minns and the Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. The PM paid a surprise visit to St Fiacre's Catholic Primary School Leichhardt and kindly offered himself up for a student press conference! They seized the opportunity too, putting Mr Albanese in the hot seat with thoughtful questions about his schooling experience and what it takes to lead the nation.

Meanwhile NSW Premier Chris Minns was a guest at Holy Spirit Catholic College Lakemba as the school hosted its annual Careers Expo and Enrichment Day. The Premier encouraged Year 12 students to embrace the opportunities ahead, a message that resonated throughout a day designed to help young people explore their futures with confidence and purpose.



Growing Strong Futures

The inaugural [Growing Strong Futures: Sydney Catholic Schools Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education 2025 report](#) reaffirms our Catholic commitment to the dignity of every person and our responsibility to strengthen educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Showcasing inspiring student and staff stories alongside system-wide data, the report celebrates the strength, culture and achievements of our First Nations communities while highlighting our ongoing commitment to educational excellence, reconciliation and opportunity for every student.



Innovate Plan takes shape

In March 2023, we began our formal reconciliation journey as an Archdiocese with the launch of our [Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan](#) (RAP). Over the last two years, we have developed a better understanding of our ways of working. With the support of Reconciliation Australia, we are now moving onto the Innovate phase. [The Innovate RAP](#) is a signal of our readiness to achieve our vision for reconciliation and deliver innovative strategies to improve outcomes into the future.



Soup Kitchen serves up hope

As part of Refugee Week, the annual Catholic Education Foundation Soup Kitchen brought staff and students together to stand in solidarity with refugee students across Sydney Catholic Schools.

Embracing this year's theme, A Million Stories, students from Mary MacKillop Catholic College Wakeley and Patrician Brothers' College, Fairfield shared powerful personal accounts that celebrated the enduring importance of belonging, reminding us that everyone has the power to inspire, connect and build a more compassionate community.

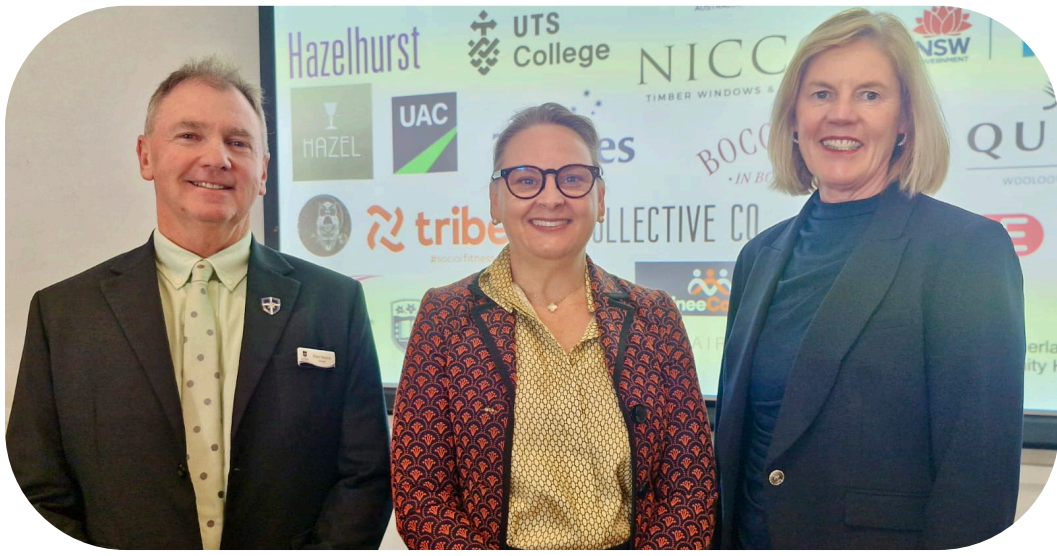
Thank you to all who donated on the day – your contributions will be put towards supporting refugee bursary recipients.

World Cup fever sweeps through SCS

The month-long football extravaganza that is the FIFA World Cup has taken our schools and Central Office by storm. Last Friday, students and staff across the system donned their green and gold to watch the Socceroos take on Paraguay and qualify for the knockout stages in the process!

Did you know that SCS has three alumni in the squad? Paul Okon-Engstler (Marion Catholic Primary School Horsley Park), Cameron Devlin (St Patrick's College Sutherland) and Christian Volpato (Villa Maria Catholic Primary School Hunters Hill) are all inspiring our next generation of sporting stars.





Strengthening partnerships for learning

On Thursday 18 June, De La Salle Catholic College Caringbah and Our Lady of Mercy Catholic College Burraneer hosted the second Business Lunch at Cronulla RSL. The day brought together the Hon. Mark Speakman, principal colleagues, SCS representatives, local business owners, and university partners. Together, attendees reflected a shared commitment to expanding authentic, future-focused learning.

These partnerships are becoming central to how we prepare students for life beyond school. When industry and universities contribute directly to learning, students see how classroom concepts operate in the real world. A Year 11 student recently reflected that hearing from a local business about its marketing strategy made the subject more meaningful, reinforcing the impact that practical insights can have on student learning.

The power of languages

The Sydney Morning Herald recently explored how our schools are helping students develop the confidence, cultural awareness and communication skills that come from learning a second language from an early age.

As St Mary's Cathedral College Sydney Italian teacher Emilia Crino explains: "It's good for their maths skills, it's good for their pattern building, it's good for so many things. It's actually great for their English literacy." You can read the full article [here](#).



Inclusion takes centre court

Sixteen schools from across the system recently took part in an All Abilities Wheelchair Basketball Gala Day Competition. More than half of every team comprised students with an NCCD profile, reflecting the competition's commitment to inclusive participation and shared sporting experiences for students of all abilities. "Students of all abilities came together to learn from one another, and show that teamwork, respect and opportunity belong to everyone," said Anna Kate Turnbull from the Pre to Post Sport team.

Engaging faithfully in a secular world

On Wednesday 17 June, Sydney Catholic Schools staff, parents and students gathered at Rosehill Gardens for the 2026 Tim Fischer Oration on Ethics in Public and Political Life. Delivered by internationally renowned Scripture scholar Professor Mary Healy, the address invited those present to consider how Christians can engage faithfully in a secular world without compromising the Gospel.

Honouring Former Deputy Prime Minister Tim Fischer's legacy of faith and public service, the evening offered both challenge and hope, reminding us that disciples of Jesus are called to bring Gospel values into public life. Professor Healy drew on Jesus' encounters with Zacchaeus and the Samaritan woman at the well to show how Christ meets people in their woundedness and transforms them through mercy and truth.



Magis 2033 projects

Mission, Vision and Values

This project is a key strategic initiative which aims to ensure our Mission, Vision and Values are not just words but experienced by all of us at SCS every day through how we work, teach and lead. A project team of school, clergy and office staff is progressing this work across three key areas: aligning system policies, procedures and guidelines; developing a practical guide for staff and establishing a consistent onboarding and formation experience for new employees. Access to practical tools will help staff self-reflect, grow professionally and contribute to a positive work and learning culture so that all can thrive and achieve their potential.



Magis at the Vatican

Magis 2033 has made the journey from Sydney to Rome! Joe Payne from the Executive Director's Office personally delivered our new strategy to the office of His Eminence Cardinal José Tolentino de Mendonça, Prefect, Dicastery for Culture and Education. Joe is in Rome as part of his work with the Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney's Commission for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations.

SCS Philosophy of Education

The advisory committee leading this project have submitted drafts of the Philosophy of Education, Image of the Child, Integral Formation Framework and Graduate Profile, to the Sydney Catholic School's Core Strategy Committee and Board for their feedback and input.

Following this, school leaders will have the opportunity to provide further input into these foundational documents of *Magis 2033* in Term 3.

School spotlight: St Paul of the Cross

At St Paul of the Cross Dulwich Hill, actions and decisions are guided by placing the student at the centre. This is a key component to the culture of the school and is underpinned by the strong and trusting relationships forged with students, parents, staff and parish.

In response to the pedagogical changes that came with curriculum reform, staff at St Paul's have collaboratively developed a school playbook. This document outlines behavioural norms and expectations, including shared statements of practice across all facets of the school. Grounded in current research and evidence-based practices, the playbook has enabled staff to effectively implement a low variance model, driven by consistent and high expectations, resulting in whole school improvement.

"This journey has enabled us to achieve measurable growth for our students academically, regardless of their level of achievement," says Principal Brooke Watson.

St Paul's was also recently ranked second in NSW for overall student growth averages among schools in the top ICSEA quartile according to an independent analysis of 2025 NAPLAN data published by the [Sydney Morning Herald](#).



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