



St Catherine's
SCHOOL | STIRLING

Small School Big Heart

PROSPECTUS



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We strive for each child to develop a strong sense of who they are and how they can use their strengths to help themselves and others flourish.

– John Low, Principal

Naturally inspired learning



Welcome to St Catherine's School

Thank you for considering our beautiful school set within the lush Adelaide Hills.

St Catherine's School is a small parish school with a big heart. Our close-knit, connected community is welcoming and inclusive. It's a place where students, families and staff enjoy a strong sense of belonging and togetherness.

We welcome students from Reception to Year 6, along with playgroup and a transition program into Reception.

St Catherine's School is inspired by the Dominican tradition. Our Catholic faith is interwoven into who we are as a school community, and it strongly underpins our school values of Respect, Commitment, Sustainability, Honesty, and Compassion. Informed by our faith, our values are embedded in all we do.

We believe knowing each child personally helps students better achieve academic success. Our teachers design and deliver an outstanding academic curriculum and extracurricular activities to unlock each child's potential, as we support your child in the journey of understanding themselves as learners, and in developing new skills and attributes.

Our supportive and inclusive community also nurtures student wellbeing, thereby inspiring them to achieve more than they ever thought possible.

Having recently enhanced student learning spaces through new construction, our 10-year building master plan ensures we remain committed to providing the optimal learning space for students, both now and in the future.

I look forward to meeting with you to further discuss your child's education at St Catherine's School and welcoming you into our small and warm community.

John Low,
Principal

Discover a world of wonder in the heart of the Hills

St Catherine's School is set on a large parcel of land amidst lush gardens and mature trees in the picturesque village of Stirling in the Adelaide Hills, just two minutes from the freeway.

Nature Play is intrinsic to our school culture and values. Our students can access an abundance of space and materials as they explore, construct, and play with natural objects.

Our staff are committed to immersing students in outdoor learning experiences, alongside Curriculum-focused learning programs that harness our tranquil outdoor spaces.

Students develop a connection with Creation and an awareness of how to care for it by using their imagination and creativity to set up cubbies, fairy gardens, shops and other worlds.

Our stunning school grounds include a large oval, forest space, playground, unique wetland environment, equipment, and multiple nature play areas.



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*The beautiful school grounds
promote nature play and there is
a wonderful sense of inclusion.
We love being a part of the
St Catherine's community.*

– Mother of children in Year 2 & Bambini



Grow & nurture

Our students, families and staff are active agents of ecological sustainability. We are motivated by faith and a strong sense of connectedness to the natural world and our global family.

Sustainability informs our teaching, learning and decision-making to help students think and act in ways that lead to a more equitable and sustainable future.

We provide leadership and advocacy opportunities for students across all years to become ECO Leaders in our student environment group.

Our school sustainability programs include water conservation, waste reduction, recycling, and advocacy through various groups, initiatives and activities.

Grow & Nurture Activities

- Chicken coop
- Aquaculture and aquaponics
- Bat and bird boxes
- Worm farms
- Butterfly gardens
- Orchard, fruit, vegetable and herb gardens
- Wetlands for revegetation and increasing habitat for local fauna
- Native gardens for mini-beast ecosystems

A personal approach to learning

We recognise that knowing children personally results in better academic results. In our small school community, every teacher and student know one another.



Through excellent pedagogical practice, coupled with a caring and accepting environment, our learning programs encourage collaboration, creative and critical thinking, while promoting lifelong learning.

Your child will acquire life skills, value sustainability and the environment, develop a sense of responsibility and social justice, and be supported in building a strong positive self-image within our inclusive school community.

Ongoing leadership opportunities enable students to become active participants in school life and the broader community, as well as empowering them to be change makers.

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Each day children are warmly nurtured, deeply engaged in learning, and flourishing into capable individuals.

– Bianca Foote, Primary Years Educator



Beyond the curriculum

At St Catherine's School, students learn essential literacy and numeracy skills aligned with the Australian Curriculum.

Learning areas include Religious Education, Mathematics, Science, English, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Arts, Design and Technology, Health, Italian, Physical Education, and Sustainability.

Technologies such as 3D printers, drones, Bee Bots, and a multimedia room support extended STEM learning, while extracurricular activities including debating, music, coding, art, and sport enable students to explore their talents and passions.

Inclusive learning

We place a strong emphasis on early intervention for students who require additional support to achieve their learning goals. We also provide personalised support from reading, speech pathology, and occupational therapy, to addressing other specific needs.

Wellbeing

At St Catherine's School, the education and wellbeing of all our students is at the core of what we do to nurture each student in a holistic way. We support students to thrive and achieve their potential by encouraging individuality in a caring, warm, and stimulating environment.

Our wellbeing program and use of Positive Education principles help to develop student self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationships skills, and responsible decision making.





Faith focus

Faith is embedded within the heart and culture of our school, drawing a strong sense of integrity and enabling students to respect the dignity and inestimable worth of each and every person.

Inspired by the life of Jesus and informed by the Dominican Charism and the motto 'Veritas', students are encouraged to seek and embrace the truth, and what is right and just, from the Christian perspective.

We enjoy a strong partnership with the Adelaide Hills Catholic Parish and St Matthew's Church, located in nearby Bridgewater.

Our sacramental program provides an opportunity for students to receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Holy Communion through a parish-led and school-supported partnership.





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I love our parish school because of its unique and very special sense of community.

Parish schools have strong Catholic values and are places of high integrity, promoting the spirit of generosity and kindness towards others.

– Krystina Dawe, Assistant Principal Religious Identity and Mission

Celebration

We regularly hold Masses and Liturgies. All students attend these celebrations of faith, with each class having multiple opportunities to lead and be involved. Families are welcome and encouraged to attend and share in these occasions.

Social justice

Through Catholic social justice teachings, our students are supported in becoming moral, compassionate, generous, and ecologically aware community members.

Our students are empowered to transform their world and uphold dignity for all through various social justice programs each term including Project Compassion, Vinnies Winter Appeal, and the Catholic Charities Appeal.



The Arts

With a focus on holistic learning, we offer an extensive Arts program whereby students can explore visual arts and media, music, and drama.



Visual & Media Arts

Our Visual Arts program exposes students to a variety of artworks and techniques from a wide range of cultures, both past and present.

We give students the opportunity to explore ideas and their own artistic choices through a range of art forms including drawing, painting, sculpture, collage, textiles, puppetry, construction, mixed media, poster, and theatre art.

We also have a purpose-built green screen room and a variety of multimedia equipment.

Performing Arts

Our specialised, diverse Performing Arts Curriculum features a balance of music and drama, allowing for students to explore and identify new interests, while also supporting them to enhance their confidence and communication skills.

Year 5 and 6 students have additional opportunities to demonstrate their performance and backstage skills in our senior school choir, annual Catholic Schools Music Festival at the Adelaide Festival Theatre, and bi-annual musical which has included *Into the Woods* and *Matilda*.

Instrumental Program

We also offer an extensive specialist Instrumental Program run by highly qualified and passionate music teachers, with private tuition in voice, piano, guitar, and violin held in our music rooms during the school day.



Sport

At St Catherine's School, students explore a vast range of sports to further develop their interests and skills.



Our inclusive Physical Education curriculum promotes fun in physical activity, while also challenging students and supporting them to develop healthy habits to last a lifetime.

Our annual sporting calendar incorporates our own Sports Day and multiple inter-school sports carnivals, while our water safety program includes swimming lessons for Reception to Year 4 students, a beach safety day for Year 5 students, and an aquatics day for Year 6 students.

Reception to Year 2 students can also choose to participate in various Learn to Play Sports programs including tennis, netball, cricket, basketball, and soccer.

Starting your journey

At St Catherine's School, we are committed to nurturing your child's transition into the school community.

Forest Friends playgroup

Held on Monday mornings during school term, our playgroup is a welcoming and inclusive group that enables both children and parents to become involved in the community before starting school.

Based on the SPICE program (Supported Playgroups Igniting Children's Engagement), children explore a range of activities each week that support key development areas and Nature Play principles.

You can follow us on our Facebook page:
facebook.com/forestfriendsplaygroup

Bambini

To help support the start of your child's school journey, our Bambini program is held each Friday morning in Terms 3 and 4, for children enrolled to attend St Catherine's School in the January Reception intake.

Your child will be nurtured as they familiarise themselves with school routines and begin building relationships with fellow classmates, helping to develop their sense of belonging and confidence within the school environment.

Mid-year Reception entry

Children who turn five on or before October 31 can also spend up to 18 months in Reception before progressing to Year 1, with the additional semester helping set a strong foundation of learning.



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Our school has a feeling of warmth that radiates in all that we do.

– Bianca Foote, Early Years Educator



Community & belonging

St Catherine's is a small school with a big heart.

Our strong and connected community of students, families, and staff all share and support the values of Respect, Commitment, Sustainability, Honesty, and Compassion.

As a small parish school in the Adelaide Hills, our school also reflects the values and ideals revered in the wider community.

Here, families create and nurture a strong sense of belonging and togetherness to create a uniquely warm, caring, and inclusive community.

Parents & friends

Family involvement is a big part of our connected school community.

Our active Parents & Friends group is a strong tradition, welcoming all to cultivate new friendships and networks, while providing valued school support.

Activities include social outings, family gatherings, canteen, volunteering with students, school events, a welcoming committee, and monthly meetings.

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Walking into St Catherine's is like walking into someone's giant and happy backyard.

– Father of children in Year 1 and Year 6



Senior student leadership program

Our senior students enjoy an outstanding leadership program in which they learn collaboration while further developing their confidence, interests, strengths, and new life skills.

The program which operates across Year 5 and Year 6 sees students take part in our radio and podcasting program, along with a biannual \$20 Boss Enterprise program. Students can join one of our debating teams and participate in competitions held through Debating SA. In Year 6, students get ready for secondary school by getting involved in activities such as student reflection days, Kangaroo Island camp, Dominican Leadership Program and social justice initiatives.

Uniform

With just one year-round uniform consisting of several activewear items and including comfortable shoes, our students are empowered to choose what to wear each day based on the weather and personal preference – while also feeling free to actively explore and enjoy our extensive grounds.

OSHC

To help families balance time and responsibilities, our Outside of School Hours Care – facilitated by Camp Australia – provides a safe, reliable, engaging, and affordable program for families to access both before and after school.



Discover a world of wonder

St Catherine's School is a 2 minute drive off the freeway via the Crafers or Stirling exit.



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