



HARP OF THE SPIRIT

TERM 1 – ISSUE 1
13 February 2026



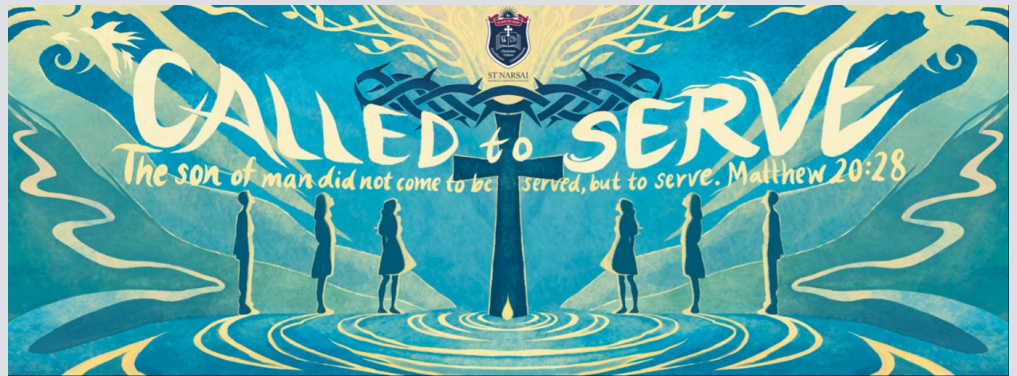
ST NARSAI
ASSYRIAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

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From the Principal

Edwar Dinkha



Dear Parents, Guardians and Friends,

It is with much pleasure that I welcome all members of the college community back to another promising school year in 2026. I also wish to extend a very warm welcome and greetings to all K-6 students, families and staff who joined our college in 2026 as well as the New Year 7 students and families who have joined our college community this year. I pray you and your families have had a restful summer break with your loved ones and are excited as we embark on a new school year in 2026.

On behalf of all our staff, I extend a sincere congratulations to our graduating Year 12 2025 students for completing the High School Certificate last year and for achieving some outstanding HSC results.

Welcome to 2026

As we start another school year, I pray that all our students experience and enjoy success and make consistent and tangible progress towards their personal learning goals in 2026 and beyond. This year's college spiritual theme is central to our Christian identity and mission. As we move through 2026, we are invited to live out our Lord's call to serve in every aspect of our lives and daily roles at the college. May our daily interactions with each other reflect Christ's example of humility and selfless service. As staff we will endeavour to model Christ's servant leadership for our students by defining greatness through humility and sacrificial service to others.

May 2026 be a year where we intentionally respond to Christ's call, serving with love, compassion and faith in all that we do.

Information Evenings

Thank you to all the parents who were able to attend the three Assessment Information evenings over the last two weeks. As I mentioned in these evenings, it has been pleasing to report that students are already settling in as they start engaging fully in their studies. Through my daily walkthroughs across the College, I am encouraged to see students at all levels actively engaging in their studies and enthusiastically participating in various learning activities inside and outside classrooms.

In my addresses to students during two college assemblies and previous brief cohort meetings, I emphasised that the college would continue to provide many opportunities to all students to succeed and achieve as we start a new year, and that success is contingent on individual students taking responsibility for their learning. Other staff also addressed students and encouraged them to take responsibility for their learning and invited students to take initiatives that will help them to become independent learners and take responsibility for their own learning in 2026.

Strengthening Our Mission Through Five Pillars of Growth

In 2026, college staff will be working on implementing the Assyrian Christian Schools (ACS) School Improvement Plan 2025-2027. This three-year plan uses five important Pillars as a guide to cover all its components. These pillars are:

1. Faith and Heritage
2. Student and Staff Wellbeing
3. Quality Teaching and Learning
4. Community Engagement
5. Operations and Infrastructure

KLA and Pastoral Care teams will develop targeted Improvement Plans to address relevant elements from the five Pillars mentioned above.

From the Deputy Principal (Welfare and Wellbeing)

Mary Ismail

Dear Parents/Carers and Students,

Welcome back to the start of the 2026 school year, and a special welcome to all the new families who have joined the St Narsai Assyrian Christian College Community for the first time, as well as our new Kindergarten to Year 6 students. I hope everyone enjoyed a relaxing and safe holiday and is now ready for the challenges and opportunities on offer this year.

I would like to thank the parents who have ensured that their sons and daughters have positively returned to school, with the necessary materials for their classes. A settled start is essential to establishing habits that bring continuity to the year ahead; thus, the time and preparation parents put into developing a routine are very much appreciated.

I especially would like to thank you for your patience and understanding regarding the challenges in purchasing the correct uniform from our school uniform provider. The blue sports polo shirt will be in the store in the next two weeks. Other uniform items will not be restocked once they are sold out, as we transition to the new school uniform in 2026. More details will follow throughout the year.

Message From Lowes Wetherill Park

LOWES Wetherill Park has informed us that they have every uniform item in stock (except the school jumper, which will be in stock in the next few weeks). Please ensure your child is attending school in the correct uniform, including the right bag. Only the St Narsai school bag is permitted.

Communication

The College regularly communicates with parents/carers via emails and SMS. You must ensure your details are up to date in our system so that you do not miss important information and so that the College can contact relevant family members, including emergency contacts, when required.

If your citizenship status has changed since June 2025, any of your details have changed, or you are unsure of the details we have, please call the College on 88181300 or email info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au with the new information, including your child/children's names. Details include phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, contact names, emergency contacts, and medical needs.

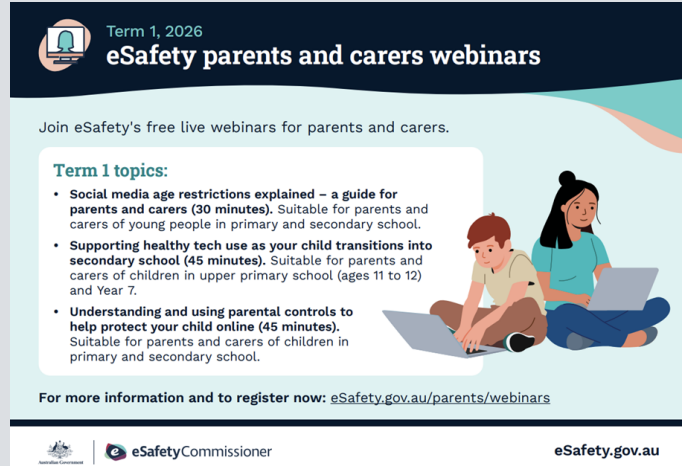
Conditions Of Enrolment and Parent Code Of Conduct

A friendly reminder, all parents/carers signed and agreed to the Conditions of Enrolment to St Narsai Assyrian Christian College upon enrolment. College expectations are also confirmed on page 4 of the student diary. Please take a moment to read through the expectations and discuss them with your children. We also request that all parents/carers familiarise themselves with the Parent Code of Conduct, which can be found on the college website under Parent Code of Conduct.

eSafety's 2026 Parent and Carer Webinar Schedule

A whole-school approach to online safety education includes support for parents. eSafety parent webinars help you gain the knowledge, skills and tools to support your child in having safe online experiences. Please access details about webinars through this [link](#).

Please visit <https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents> for information on a range of online safety topics. Every year, the eSafety Commission offers bite-sized 30-minute webinars for secondary school parents. Please keep an eye out on the website for the eSafety Webinar schedule for the topics being presented this year.



Term 1, 2026
eSafety parents and carers webinars

Join eSafety's free live webinars for parents and carers.

Term 1 topics:

- **Social media age restrictions explained – a guide for parents and carers (30 minutes).** Suitable for parents and carers of young people in primary and secondary school.
- **Supporting healthy tech use as your child transitions into secondary school (45 minutes).** Suitable for parents and carers of children in upper primary school (ages 11 to 12) and Year 7.
- **Understanding and using parental controls to help protect your child online (45 minutes).** Suitable for parents and carers of children in primary and secondary school.

For more information and to register now: [eSafety.gov.au/parents/webinars](https://www.esafety.gov.au/parents/webinars)

eSafety Commissioner | [eSafety.gov.au](https://www.esafety.gov.au)

Year 7 and 10 Immunisation Schedule 2026

Parents of Year 7 and 10 students will receive information about the NSW Health immunisation program. There is a new online process to register your child. Please contact the school if you do not receive this information.

Catch-up vaccinations for students who missed their 2025 vaccinations will also be available.

Lockers and Locks

At the start of every year, students are allocated a locker to store their books, bags, and other items. Every student must use a padlock to keep their belongings secure.

- The school is not responsible for any valuables left inside the lockers. This includes mobile phones, jewellery, money, etc.
- The locker is school property, and the College reserves the right to search a student's locker when there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a student has breached the College Code of Conduct.

Public Buses

Every morning, 5 public buses leave Prarieewood Tway exclusively for St Narsai College students. We ask that all parents drop their children off before 7.30 and ensure they board the bus. This will ensure all students attend school on time. See the following bus timetable:

MORNING SERVICES		
Bus No	Departing	Bus Route
9113	7:29	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 7:45
9113	7:36	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 7:52
9113	7:41	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 7:57
9113	7:48	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 8:04
9113	7:54	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 8:10
9113	8:04	EX PRAIRIEWOOD T-WAY STN - via T-Way, L> The Horsley Drive, L> Horsley Rd, R> Bus Bay. Arr school 8:20

Attendance

At SNACC, everyday counts!

Students are required to have a minimum of 95% attendance to fulfil the requirements of any course they are studying satisfactorily. Students are requested to be at school before 8:15am. Roll call begins at 8.30 every morning. Students are expected to attend and be punctual to all classes and activities. See Attendance Procedures in this week's newsletter for the actions taken by the College if attendance is a concern. Lateness to school impacts a student's attendance rate. Consequences, such as afternoon detentions, are given to students who consistently arrive late to school. At times, parent interviews will also be required.

A reminder that school gates open at 7.45am. No supervision is provided before this time.

Mobile Phones

St Narsai has banned mobile phones on campus. Students are not to have a mobile phone on their person at any time during school hours.

Students may have their phones with them before and after entering and leaving school grounds. However, during school hours, the phone is to be turned off and locked away. Anyone seen with a mobile phone will have their phone confiscated. Please refer to the student diary for more information.

Students are not to use their phones for canteen purchases. Therefore, please provide an alternative payment method for your child to use.

School Diary and Expectations

Parents need to read through their child's school diary.

It holds essential information on the College's policies on uniforms, mobile phones, etc., and serves as a strong link between teachers and parents regarding the child.

If lost or defaced, a student must purchase another for \$25 from the College office.

Each student is to bring their diary to every lesson, every day. We ask that all parents/carers check their child's diary for daily communication from their teachers. We also

require parents to sign their child's diary weekly in the provided space to acknowledge their child's work and behaviour. This will be checked every Monday during ASW (Academic Skills Workshops: a special time allocated for teachers to support students in their learning).



P&F Burger Day

On Tuesday, 10th February, we had our first P&F Burger Day for the year. Burgers made with heart! Thank you to our wonderful committee members for their time and passion. Always serving with a smile.



Final Word

Our college is dedicated to educational excellence, encouraging students to go beyond their potential, providing opportunities to excel, and also prioritising their well-being. We hope that you feel the welcoming presence of all in the community and that your journey with us fosters our school motto: Excellence, Christian Values, and Commitment.

From the Deputy Principal (Curriculum)

Mary Khina

Dear Parents, Students and Friends,

Welcome to the 2026 school year. We hope that you had a restful and refreshing break. A particular welcome to the new students and their families who join the St Narsai community this year. It has been wonderful to see our students return to the classrooms eager to learn and progress even further this year. I am looking forward to working with all students and teachers as we embark on the 2026 school year.

HSC Results

Congratulations to all our class of 2025 students. They have achieved some exceptional results, making 2025 the best in the history of the HSC at St Narsai. We are proud of all our students' achievements. Their hard work through their schooling journey and in Year 12 resulted in many outstanding results.

Thank you also to their teachers for their dedication and persistence in guiding our students to achieve. We also extend our appreciation to the families of the Class of 2025 for their support throughout their children's studies. We are proud to share the following highlights with you.

College Dux and Top ATAR: Michal Dinkha with an ATAR of 98.75

Michal received a Band 6 or equivalent in the following subjects: English Advanced, Mathematics Extension 1, Mathematics Extension 2, and Society and Culture.

ATAR Results

Our students achieved excellent ATAR results. The following students are congratulated for achieving an ATAR above 90.

Student	ATAR
Michal Dinkha	98.75
Mary Sada	96.9
Larissa Kifarkis	96.25
Stavro Ablahad	94.05
Ninweta Khaey	93.8
Olivia Ishak	93.65
Nina Audisho	91.40
Daniella Shemon	90.8
Santa Dinkha	90.05

Distinguished Achievers

25 of our students were in the NSW Distinguished Achievers list, receiving a mark of 90 or higher in one or more of the courses studied. 45 Band 6 or equivalent results were achieved.

Student	Band 6 or equivalent achieved
Jessica Abdul Ahad	Society and Culture
Stavro Ablahad	Society and Culture
Elena Aghajan	Society and Culture
Nina Audisho	Business Studies, Community and Family Studies, Society and Culture
Bahra David	Society and Culture
Nisha Dawod	Society and Culture
Aniela Denkha	Community and Family Studies
Michal Dinkha	English Advanced, Mathematics Extension 1, Mathematics Extension 2, Society and Culture
Santa Dinkha	Business Studies, Community and Family Studies, Society and Culture
Michayla Gabriel	Food Technology
Dalya Hekmat	Ancient History, Society and Culture
Olivia Ishak	Community and Family Studies, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Society and Culture
Ankedo Katcho	Society and Culture
Ninweta Khaey	Ancient History, Community and Family Studies, Society and Culture, Studies of Religion II
Larissa Kifarkis	Ancient History, English Advanced, Society and Culture
Antonella Kouraih	Society and Culture
Netanya Mammo	Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, Society and Culture
Myriam Mikhaeel	Society and Culture
Gabriella Narse	Society and Culture
Anabelle Oraham	Society and Culture
Mary Sada	English Advanced, English Extension 1, Society and Culture
Daniella Shemon	Community and Family Studies, Society and Culture
Manuela Toma	Society and Culture
Simon Yako	Mathematics Standard 2
Carolyn Youkhana	Ancient History, Society and Culture

The College was ranked 187 in NSW with a success rate of 10.02%. This is the highest rank for St Narsai. Over 80% of our students received university offers for 2026 across various courses and universities. We are proud of all our students' achievements and wish them the best in all their future endeavours.

Alumni

We are always looking to keep in touch with former St Narsai students. If you graduated from St Narsai, please email us and let us know what you're doing post high school. We will have opportunities for former students to return and visit the College and share their experiences with current students. Please email info@stnarsai.nsw.edu.au if you are interested in joining our alumni mailing list, or visit our St Narsai Alumni Facebook page.

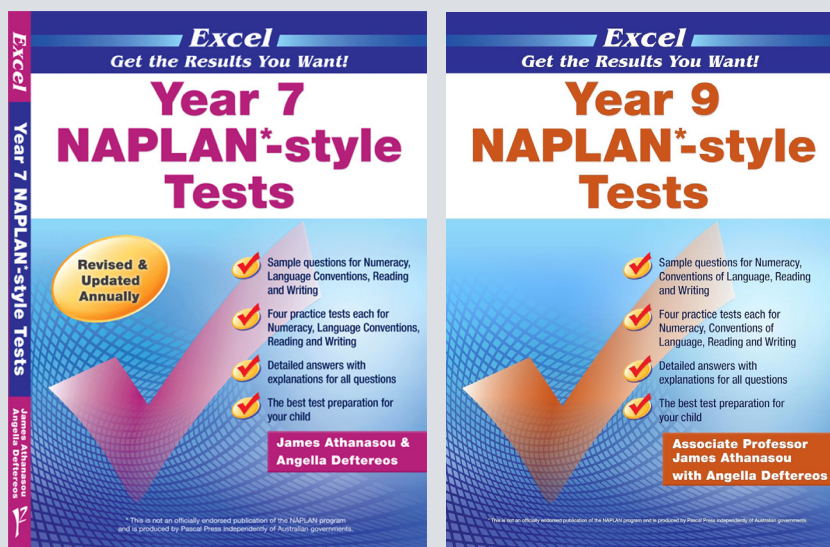
NAPLAN Tests

All Year 7 and 9 students will be sitting the 2026 NAPLAN online tests from 11th to 23rd March. More details about the dates of each test will be sent to caregivers next week. In preparation for these tests, all students have been given access to online literacy and numeracy programs, including Mathletics, Maths Online, Lexia and Education Perfect. Please encourage your child to log on to these programs daily and complete the tasks set by their teachers. Teachers will monitor students' progress and completion of assigned tasks. Students are also encouraged to improve their literacy and numeracy skills by reading widely and using online typing tests and websites such as www.exceltestzone.com.au.

The [NAPLAN site](#) also provides details on the tests, past test papers, and demonstrations to assist students with their test preparation.

Teachers in Years 7 and 9 are also assisting students with strategies in class with a literacy and numeracy focus.

The Excel books may be helpful for students preparing for the tests. These are available for purchase at Newsagencies, Big W, or other department or book stores. They are also available online at exceltestzone.com.au.



ICT and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Students are required to bring their devices to every lesson. These need to be fully charged. Students can charge their laptops in the library charging station during break time as needed. Students in Years 7-9 are also required to bring their earphones as they will be working on literacy and numeracy programs that require sound. Please encourage your child to bring their device to school every day.

Independent Learners

At St Narsai, our teaching and learning programs are designed to foster holistic growth in our students. With a focus on Visible learning and Design for Deep learning strategies, students are encouraged and supported as they develop the qualities of independent learners.

Independent learners possess several key qualities that enable them to take charge of their own learning journey. They are self-motivated and curious, always eager to explore new topics and deepen their understanding. These students set personal goals and work diligently to achieve them, demonstrating strong time management and organisational skills. They are proactive in seeking out resources and support when needed, and they are not afraid to ask questions or seek clarification.

Additionally, independent learners exhibit resilience and perseverance. They understand that learning is a process that involves challenges and setbacks, and they are willing to put in the effort to overcome obstacles. They reflect on their learning experiences, identify areas for improvement, and continuously strive to enhance their skills and knowledge. By fostering these qualities, students can become more confident, capable, and successful in their academic pursuits.

Students at St Narsai are also expected to be lifelong learners. An effective learner demonstrates the qualities and characteristics as outlined in the holistic approach to education poster below. Teachers regularly remind students of these dispositions. Parents are encouraged to discuss with their child how they have displayed the dispositions daily.

Learner Dispositions

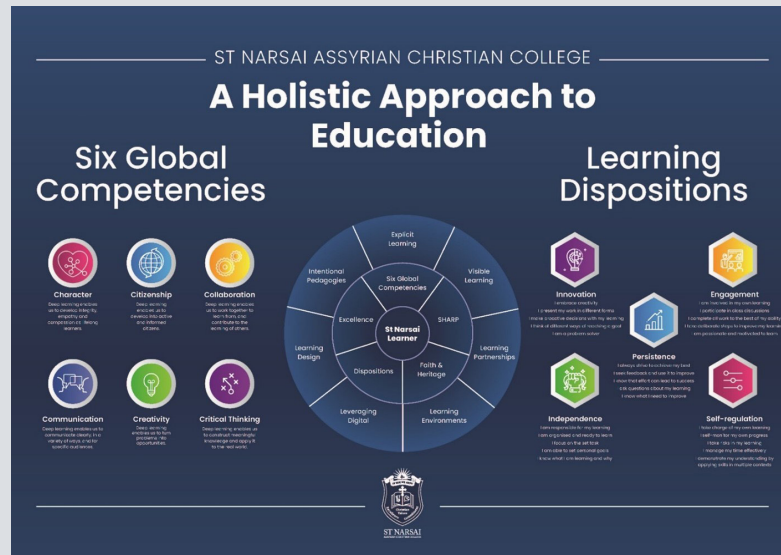
As we commence 2026, students are reminded of the expectations of an effective learner at St Narsai. Please discuss with your child how they have demonstrated these characteristics throughout their day at the College.

At SNACC, an effective learner demonstrates:

- Independence – I am responsible for my learning.
- Engagement – I am involved in my own learning.
- Persistence – I always strive to achieve my best.
- Self-Regulation – I take charge of my own learning.
- Innovation – I embrace creativity.

Six Global Competencies

In addition to these, students are all working to develop the 6 global competencies as we continue Deep Learning at the College.



Student Progress

Our data team has been busy analysing Semester 2 2025 data and, with the Year Coordinators, has been interviewing and working with all students on their learning goals for 2026.

Teachers have already begun collecting data on student learning to monitor each learner's progress and cater to individual learning needs. Students will shortly start receiving formal assessment tasks that will contribute to the details reported in their Half-Yearly Reports at the end of Term 2. If you would like to discuss your child's progress so far, please contact the College office by phone or email, and they will arrange an appointment with the relevant Year Co-ordinator or class teacher.

Information Evenings

Thank you to all the parents who attended our recent information evenings. It was great to see you in attendance. If you were unable to attend, please make sure you speak to your child about the evening, as all students will have received a session and been provided with the handbook. We encourage all parents to attend these evenings, as they provide essential information and offer an opportunity to meet with your child's teachers.

I look forward to working with all parents/carers as we continue the journey of student learning at St Narsai.

From the Head of Primary

Renia Isaac

A New Beginning: Welcome to Our Primary School Community

Dear Parents and Families,

As we begin a brand-new school year, I warmly welcome each and every one of you to what is truly a defining moment in our school's journey.

This year is not simply the turning of a calendar – it is the beginning of something extraordinary. Opening our doors in a new school environment represents hope, vision, and the bold step of building a community where every child is known, valued, and inspired to flourish.

For our students, this is a year of fresh starts. For our families, it is a year of partnership. And for our school, it is a year of laying foundations that will shape not only academic growth, but character, faith, and confidence.

Ensuring Every Child Feels Safe, Seen and Supported

We recognise that starting at a new school can bring a mix of excitement and uncertainty. New classrooms, new routines, new friendships – these are significant moments for young learners.

That is why our primary focus at the beginning of this year is connection.

Our dedicated staff are intentionally:

- Creating welcoming and nurturing classroom environments
- Establishing strong, predictable routines to build confidence
- Collaborative activities to foster friendships
- Supporting emotional well-being through open communication and pastoral care
- Encouraging resilience, kindness, and independence.

In these early weeks, especially, our mission is clear: every child deserves to walk through our gates feeling secure, confident, and excited to learn.

Building a School Culture from the Ground Up

Being part of a new school is a rare and special privilege. Together, we are not just filling classrooms – we are shaping culture. We are creating a place where learning is joyful, where faith guides our actions, and where students are encouraged to discover their God-given potential.

Already, we are witnessing inspiring achievements among our Primary students:

- Brave steps into new friendships
- Enthusiastic participation in classroom learning
- Demonstrations of kindness and leadership in the playground
- Pride in wearing their uniform and representing their school.

These early successes are powerful reminders that when children feel supported, they rise with confidence and purpose.

The Vital Role of Families

A smooth transition into a new school environment works best when classroom learning and homework go hand in hand.

Families can support this journey by:

- Speaking positively about new beginnings
- Establishing calm and consistent routines
- Encouraging independence and responsibility
- Listening and reassuring children as they adjust
- Maintaining open communication with teachers.

Your encouragement at home strengthens the confidence children build at school.

A Year of Belonging, Growth and Lasting Success

As Head of Primary, I am incredibly proud of the spirit already emerging within our school community. What we are building together is more than a campus – it is a place of belonging.

Every new beginning holds the promise of something great – and together, we will make this year one of belonging, growth, and lasting success.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education. We look forward to walking this journey with you and celebrating every milestone along the way.

From the K-2 Curriculum Coordinator

Mary Khano

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to a brand-new school year at St Narsai Assyrian Christian College. We are so excited to begin Term 1 with our Infants students across Kindergarten, Year 1 and Year 2.

For many children, this is a very special season of change. Our Kindergarten students are starting school for the very first time, while our Year 1 and Year 2 students are also beginning their journey in a brand-new school environment. Whether your child is stepping into classrooms for the first time or adjusting to a new setting, Term 1 is all about settling in, building routines, forming friendships and developing confidence.

This term, students will be supported through engaging learning experiences that nurture both academic growth and emotional wellbeing.

Learning in Term 1 – Building Strong Foundations

Christian Studies

Faith and values remain at the heart of our learning. This term, students will explore God's Creation, as well as the important season of Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Through prayers, hymns and meaningful discussions, students will deepen their understanding of why Easter is celebrated and the message of Jesus' sacrifice. Students will also learn prayers and hymns in accordance with the Assyrian Church of the East.

Assyrian Studies – My Family

Across K-2, students will focus on the theme of My Family, learning how to speak about themselves and their loved ones in Assyrian. Students will develop vocabulary, expressions and sentence structures through listening, reading and play-based activities. Year 2 students will also begin learning important Assyrian vowels to strengthen pronunciation and reading skills.

English – Growing Confident Readers and Writers

- Kindergarten students will begin learning through the InitialLit program, developing phonemic awareness, handwriting, tricky words and oral language. They will also explore imaginative storytelling and begin creating their own simple stories.
- Year 1 students will engage in rich storytelling experiences that inspire imagination, creativity and thoughtful discussion. They will learn to identify characters, themes and key story elements.
- Year 2 students continue building strong literacy foundations through InitialLit, focusing on spelling, reading fluency, grammar and comprehension. They will also explore informative texts and create their own written pieces about the natural world.

Mathematics – Developing Problem Solvers

Throughout Term 1, students will explore:

- Number and Algebra
- Measurement and Space
- Statistics and Probability
- Working Mathematically through reasoning and problem-solving.

Kindergarten will focus on foundational number skills and shapes, while Year 1 and Year 2 students will extend their understanding through hands-on problem-solving strategies and mathematical discussions.

HSIE – Exploring the Past

Students will explore history through stories and ancient worlds:

- Kindergarten will share and sequence personal stories from the past and compare life then and now.
- Year 1 will explore ancient China and Egypt.
- Year 2 will investigate the fascinating worlds of ancient Greece and Rome.

Science & Technology – Curious Minds at Work

Students will engage in hands-on scientific investigations:

- Kindergarten will explore the human body and how our senses help us understand the world.
- Year 1 will investigate how our senses connect us to our environment.
- Year 2 will explore forces and movement through practical experiments and design challenges.

PDHPE and Creative Arts – Healthy Bodies and Creative Minds

Students will participate in Healthy Harold programs and lessons focused on personal wellbeing, safe choices and positive relationships. Through sport and movement activities, they will develop fundamental movement skills such as running, balancing, throwing and catching.

In Creative Arts, students will explore music through singing, percussion, rhythm, listening and movement activities, building confidence and creativity.

Helping Your Child Settle Into the School Year

Starting a new school year – and for many, a new school – can be both exciting and overwhelming. Here are some practical ways you can support your child at home:

- Establish Consistent Routines

Children thrive on predictability. Early bedtimes, calm mornings and consistent after-school routines help them feel secure and ready to learn.

- Read Together Every Day

Just 10 minutes of shared reading builds vocabulary, comprehension and confidence.

- Talk About Their Day

Ask open-ended questions such as: “What was the best part of your day?” , “Who did you sit next to?” , “What is something new you learned?”

- Encourage Independence

Allow your child to practise packing their bag, organising their lunchbox and putting on their shoes. Small responsibilities build confidence.

- Be Patient and Positive

Adjusting to a new classroom, teacher and environment takes time. Celebrate effort, bravery and progress rather than perfection.

- Partner With the School

If you have any concerns, please reach out. A strong home–school partnership makes all the difference.

We are truly looking forward to a joyful and faith-filled year of growth, discovery and learning. Thank you for entrusting us with your children during these important early years of education.

From the Science Department

Elias Atto

Dear parents/guardians,

Welcome to the 2026 school year. The Science faculty looks forward to another year of engaging and meaningful learning experiences that encourage curiosity, inquiry and practical engagement across all year groups. We extend a warm welcome to our new Year 7 students as they begin their secondary learning journey and settle into life at the College.

Throughout Term 1, students across Years 7–10 will commence new units of work that introduce key scientific concepts, knowledge and skills. Learning activities will continue to be designed to build strong foundations through hands-on investigations, collaborative tasks and opportunities to apply scientific thinking to real-world contexts.

Year 7 students will commence the year with the topic Observing the Universe, which introduces students to the branches of science and to scientific thinking, observation, and investigation. Students will also develop essential laboratory skills and safe work practices as they begin their high school Science studies.



Year 8 students will explore biological systems through the unit Nature's Factories, which examines how cells, tissues and organs work together to sustain life. Year 9 students will commence the study of Energy, focusing on electricity and its everyday applications. Year 10 students will develop their understanding of genetics, building key knowledge and skills that support further study in senior Science courses.

Year 11 students, now wearing their senior shirts with pride, are beginning their senior studies with a growing sense of maturity and determination. Their enthusiasm is encouraging; however, it is important to emphasise that Stage 6 Science courses require consistent effort in the classroom and through independent study at home to achieve success. This expectation is equally important for our Year 12 students, who are entering the final stage of their high school journey. Senior students are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning and adopt a proactive and committed approach to their studies. We strongly encourage them to take advantage of after-school classes to strengthen their understanding and further enhance their academic performance.



In closing, we encourage all students to approach their Science studies with curiosity and enthusiasm. Our dedicated Science teachers are committed to supporting and guiding students throughout their learning journey. Students are also encouraged to develop effective, balanced study routines to manage their academic commitments effectively. Finally, all students are reminded to bring a fully working device to every lesson and to arrive punctually. These expectations are essential for active participation and for making the most of valuable learning time. If your son or daughter has not yet met these requirements, please ensure they do so as soon as possible.

We look forward to a productive and successful year of learning in Science, and thank parents and guardians for their continued support.

From the English Department

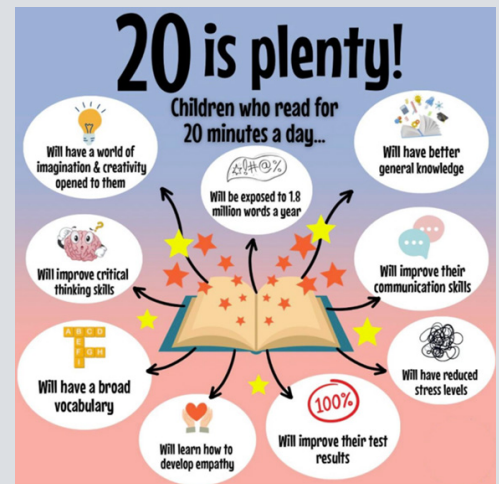
Amy Kurver

Dear parents/guardians,

As we begin the term, the English faculty would like to share some important information about literacy learning and the upcoming NAPLAN assessments in Week 7.

NAPLAN provides valuable insight into students' reading, writing, spelling, and language skills. While it is only one measure of progress, it helps teachers identify strengths and areas for growth and guides future teaching and support.

A key part of our literacy program is Lexia, which students use regularly in class to build reading accuracy, comprehension, spelling, and grammar skills. We strongly encourage students to also engage with Lexia at home, as consistent practice leads to the greatest improvement.



How Parents Can Support Literacy at Home

- ✓ Checklist
- ◇ Encourage regular reading at home (fiction, non-fiction, newspapers, or magazines)
- ◇ Talk with your child about what they are learning in English
- ◇ Provide time and a quiet space for Lexia use at home
- ◇ Encourage regular Lexia logins and focused completion of tasks
- ◇ Praise effort and persistence rather than focusing on test results
- ◇ Help establish positive routines around reading and homework.

Developing strong literacy skills is a gradual process, and confidence grows through consistent practice and encouragement. We appreciate the ongoing partnership between home and school and look forward to supporting students' literacy growth throughout the year.

From the College Counsellor

Berta Rasho

When Should Kids Get a Smartphone? The Research, the Risks, & a Better Way Forward By Dr Justin Coulson

As a new school year begins, many parents find themselves facing a familiar dilemma: “Is it time to give my child a phone?”

The pressure can feel enormous — socially, logistically, and emotionally. Children insist that “everyone has one,” other parents reassure us “it’s what happens in Year (X)”, and we wonder whether refusing is unreasonable or outdated.

But before making the jump; pause. While smartphones are part of modern childhood, the age a child receives one matters — a lot.

The Stats That Make You Shudder

A recent peer-reviewed study in [Pediatrics](#) followed more than 10,000 children aged 10–12. They found that earlier acquisition of a smartphone is associated with significantly worse outcomes. Children who received a smartphone during their 12th year had:

- 57% higher odds of clinical-level mental health difficulties by age 13
- 62% higher odds of insufficient sleep
- 40% higher odds of obesity
- 31% higher odds of depression

The tween and teen brain — particularly the prefrontal cortex responsible for impulse control, planning, and decision-making — isn’t mature right now. The never-ending whirlwind of apps, games, notifications, and distraction (plus time on social platforms that isn’t technically allowed anymore) can be overwhelming for a brain still under construction.

Research internationally suggests a similar theme: Every year we delay smartphone access tends to reduce risk.

Why Parents Usually Say Yes — And Where It Goes Wrong

Parents give me four reasons for handing over a smartphone to their child:

1. Safety (“What if they need help?”)

Response: Smartphones are not required for safety. A basic ‘dumb phone’, watch-phone, or even a household landline solves the safety problem without handing over social media, messaging apps, games, or endless internet access.

2. Logistics (“I need to coordinate pickups and plans.”) INSIGHTS.

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Children survived without phones for generations. Clear communication ahead of time works better than constant messaging, and it builds resilience and independence. Set a pickup time and place. Teach children how to ask an adult for help. Make a simple backup plan (“If I’m late, you start walking...”). Or buy a dumb phone.

3. Social Connection (“They’ll be left out without one.”)

Group chats and digital friend circles feel social, but they often increase comparison and competition, exclusion, anxiety, cyberbullying, and sleep disruption. In-person friendships are better developmentally.

4. “They Need to Learn Eventually”

Giving a 12-year-old a smartphone to “learn to manage it” is like giving that same 12-year-old a bottle of vodka to “learn to drink responsibly.” Children aren’t developmentally ready for that level of access.

A Framework that Actually Works

The standard in our family is simple: “When you can afford it and pay for it yourself — it’s yours.”

That includes: the device, the monthly plan, repairs, replacements if lost or broken. This framework works because it:

- Delays acquisition naturally
- Builds financial responsibility
- Shifts entitlement to initiative
- Reduces peer pressure
- Introduces natural consequences

Most children don’t have \$800–\$1500 for a device plus monthly fees until somewhere between 15–17 — which aligns with many child psychologists’ recommendations.

“But My Child Already Has a Smartphone...”

If the horse has already bolted — please don’t panic. You haven’t “ruined” anything.

Instead, create clear, developmentally appropriate boundaries. If possible, consider stepping back from smartphones to simpler options — plenty of families do this successfully.

The Real Question

Smartphones aren’t evil, and technology isn’t the enemy. But early access creates problems that are harder to undo than they are to prevent. Delaying smartphone access — even by one year — can make a meaningful difference to mental health, sleep, and learning.

If you’d like more info about setting screen boundaries, check out [The Screen Smart Series](#).