



Celebrating
185
years in 2025

ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE FOR GIRLS

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Students' blankets in demand as icy winter takes hold

At St Patrick's College, a quiet act of service has taken on new urgency this winter.

With temperatures dropping and housing and cost-of-living pressures converging, the College's Knitting Group was asked to deliver their biannual batch of warm knitted items earlier than usual. The call came from the St Vincent de Paul Society, which has reported a sharp rise in demand from families experiencing severe financial stress and homelessness through the Nagle Centre in Campbelltown.

Thanks to the group's dedication, the College was proud to donate 50 blankets, 16 scarves, 23 beanies, one baby jacket, and a pair of mittens to the Nagle Centre. Every item is marked with a label that reads, "Handmade with love by the St Patrick's Knitting Group."

Coordinator of the Knitting Group, Mrs Francesca Musico Rullo, has been a leader of the club since it began. She said the cocurricular activity began 19 years ago as a means to deliver skill development to students and outreach to the community.

"Each year, we organise our first blanket handover to the St Vincent de Paul Society in late June or July, then another in September," she said.

"We are happy to have been able to deliver our items a little earlier this year, to go some way towards meeting the rising need in our community."

St Patrick's College students, staff and friends of the College - affectionately known as the "knitting ladies", some of whom have been knitting for the group since its inception - meet each week to knit squares that are sewn into blankets. Staff and volunteers mentor students to become adept knitters and to build an intergenerational community with connection and service at its core.

Mrs Mary Leask, College Principal, also an avid knitter, contributes squares that she makes at home.

“The Knitting Group is a wonderful reflection of the College’s Benedictine values - community, service and hospitality - in action, and is one of the many ways our students give of their time and talents to positively impact our community,” she said.

“Meaningful impact often begins with small, deliberate acts of care. I’m proud of the students, staff and volunteers who have contributed to sustaining the Knitting Group for 19 years. It is a reminder that there are many ways to respond to the needs of the world with compassion and purpose.”

Ms Rebecca Cisneros and Mr Patrick Jordan from the Nagle Centre attended the College to collect the donations and to share the impact they have on the people who receive them.

Ms Cisneros spoke about a recent case involving a family from a local refuge who had lost everything; one of the first donated items they received from St Vincent de Paul was a handmade blanket from St Patrick’s College. She also highlighted the growing number of women fleeing domestic violence and the increasing population of rough sleepers and unhoused people in the Macarthur area who have found comfort and warmth through the donations.

The College extends its thanks to everyone involved in this year’s project and acknowledges the school’s important partnerships with the St Vincent de Paul Society and the Nagle Centre.

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