



Bungaree Primary School

Newsletter



Term 1, Week 2
6th February, 2026

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Respect

Positivity

Determination

Creativity

We would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands on which we all live and learn, and recognise their continuing connection to land, water and community. We acknowledge the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin Nation, where we share a place of belonging. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging and thank them for taking care of this country over countless generations.

Koling wada-ngal (Let us walk together)

From the Principal

Hello everyone,

A bright new year has begun, and it's wonderful to see our enthusiastic students ready for a fantastic 2026 at Bungaree Primary School. It is also lovely to return after a year away, and I want to sincerely thank Mr Reeve and Mr Baker for their leadership, stability and care of the school during my secondment. Welcome back to our returning families, and a warm welcome to those joining us for the first time.

A reminder that Compass is our main communication portal. All important updates, notifications and school information will be posted there, so please ensure you're connected. Ange or I can help if you need support getting started or reconnected.

Our updated Family Information Handbook will be distributed next week and uploaded to our website. It provides a helpful overview of school life at Bungaree, including routines, expectations and key information. I encourage all families to read through it, and please reach out if you have any questions or would like clarification.

This year we will again operate in two classes for most of the week, with Ms K, Miss Murphy, Mrs Ower and myself sharing teaching responsibilities. Lisa continues in Education Support, Ange will be in the office on Thursdays and Fridays, and our School Wellbeing Officer, Sinead, will attend each Thursday and some Fridays. We are fortunate to have such a dedicated and collaborative team supporting our students.

We're pleased to welcome the MARC Van back on a fortnightly basis, giving students access to a wider range of library and art resources. Mrs East will visit every second Friday, and we look forward to the rich learning opportunities this program provides.

In 2026, Bungaree Primary School will join the Victorian Government's Mental Health in Primary Schools initiative. This brings additional funding for staff professional learning, resources and access to further supports. Ms K and I will lead this work, and we are excited about the opportunities it will create for our students and staff later this term.

Our school-run Outside School Hours Care program, BungaBuddies, has commenced for the year, with Georgina and school staff facilitating after-school sessions. It's a

fun, engaging and supportive environment for children, and a great option for families needing extended care. Please contact the office for enrolment information and Child Care Subsidy details.

January was a busy month on site, with ongoing renovations in the Art Room/Kids Kitchen. We expect handover in the coming weeks, followed by the replacement of heritage windows in the Main Building. Thank you for your patience and flexibility as we navigate these works.

Our Home Reading Program has begun, offering a valuable opportunity to read with your child daily. Look out for The Resilience Project Student Diary in your Home Reader Bag. Junior students are encouraged, and Senior students required, to practise daily gratitude, empathy and mindfulness from exercises in their journals.

School Breakfast Club will return after the renovations are complete, running Wednesday to Friday from 8:30am. It is a great opportunity for students and staff to catch up over a shared meal. It also provides some wonderful life skills for students, preparing for and cleaning up after a meal. Hopefully these skills can also transfer to home! I'll notify families via Compass when we're ready to begin.

School Council will continue to meet twice per term. Thank you to our councillors—Andrew, Jarrod, Sophia, Dannie and Ms K—for their ongoing commitment to school governance and ongoing service and valued thoughts and opinions in this forum.

Scholastic Book Club is back this year too, and catalogues for the first order have been sent home. Please make the most out of our Book Club twice each term—just remember, we receive awards with Scholastic which are converted to new books in our classrooms for our children.

Friday Lunch Orders from the Bungaree Store will continue this year. Thank you to Ram and his team for supporting our school community.

Please keep an eye on Facebook and Compass for school updates. As always, keep safe and look after yourself, your family, friends and neighbours. Stay grateful, kind and mindful, as we say and do in school.

Miss Catherine Barnes, **Principal**

Calendar

February

Friday 13th	MARC Van at school
Tuesday 17th	Shrove Tuesday ... pancakes :-) and re-scheduled School Council meeting
Friday 20th	School Twilight Picnic at Kirk's Reservoir, 5:00-6:30pm
Monday 23rd- Wednesday 25th	Student Support Group meetings for Individual Education Plans (as required)
Friday 27th	MARC Van at school

March

Wednesday 4th	STEM incursion (at school)—Technology
Monday 9th	Labour Day public holiday—SCHOOL CLOSED
Wednesday 11th -Monday 23rd	NAPLAN assessment window
Friday 13th	MARC Van at school
Friday 20th	Wathaurung Cross Country events. Details to follow.
Friday 27th	MARC Van at school

April

Thursday 2nd	Student Showcase, 9:00am. Last day of Term 1, 2:30pm dismissal.
Monday 20th	Term 2 commences

Happy birthday in February

18th—Nola's birthday



Drop Off & Pick Up Times

Families are reminded that our school policy states that formal school supervision begins each day at 8:45am and concludes at 3:45pm. Before and after these times, teachers plan and prepare learning programs and meet together to discuss school matters.

Please respect this as important time for teachers in their professional practice; and ensure that you drop off your child/children between 8:45-9:00am each morning and collect them before 3:45pm.

On Breakfast Club days (Wednesday—Friday) students can be dropped off to the Art Room/Kids Kitchen from 8:30am.

School Mowing

Is your family able to help in the mowing of the school grounds sometime this year? Every little bit helps, and everyone values the contributions of family volunteers in this task to keep our grounds beautiful.

Please see Miss Barnes if you can help.

THANK YOU!



Sun Smart in Term 1

We have reminded students that during Term 1 all schools follow the principles of being Sun Smart. Everyone, students and staff alike, are required to wear a broad rim hat during outside play or learning activities. Children who do not have a hat will be required to play in designated shady areas. If you need to purchase a new hat, please contact the office for details.



Family Information Handbook 2026

Our Family Information Handbook for this year would usually have been shared with families by now, however with new and changing information, has required a few amendments this term!

We will upload a final version to our website ASAP for families to access, and copies will be distributed to everyone.

With thanks for your patience and understanding.

Miss Barnes



Our Service Road to school has a 10km/h speed limit. For everyone's safety—students, families and staff, please abide by this speed limit when arriving and departing from school at all times. Thank you.

Wellbeing Wisdom

How to help children understand and cope with grief

Grief and Loss is an often-unavoidable experience for children and young people, However it can be difficult to manage loss as an adult when you may be experiencing loss also. Often a child's reaction to loss can depend on several factors.

- The level of disruption that the loss brings to their life or environment
- How other family members are coping with the loss and how they are able to respond to questions the child may have.
- If it is death, how close the child's relationship with the person was and how involved they were in their life.
- If the child has experienced loss or adversity in the past.

A child who has experienced loss may:

- Where is (the person who has died)?
- Blame the loss on themselves
- Withdraw from relationships
- Act out, with showing aggression also being common following a loss.
- Have concentration difficulties and have a decline in academic performance.

When these signs appear, it often is showing the child's need for comfort. An adult can provide comfort to a child by:

- Maintain routine and predictability as best as possible.
- Allow space for questions to be asked, and provide simple, clear and short answers.
- Make time for hugs and chats when they are feeling worried or uncertain
- Name that grief may be impacting their behaviours and thoughts.
- Provide information about how grief comes and goes, and strong feelings will eventually become less intense as time goes on.
- Ensure they feel supported, cared for and valued. Remind them that they are strong and they will get through this tough time.



Sinead



Junior Classroom Update

We have had a fantastic start to the year, with wellbeing interviews and initial assessments providing a positive way to get to know our students and set them up for success. We have jumped straight into literacy, setting up our classroom library and a visual reading tracker to encourage reading for enjoyment.

Our home reading program is now underway, with a soft start to "Catch Up Club" for Year 3 students. As a reminder, students are encouraged to read at home each weeknight, record their reading in their diary and have it signed by an adult. Year 3 students are also asked to complete their GEM (Gratitude, Empathy, Mindfulness) homework each weeknight. Building these strong home-school partnerships now will support students as the homework load increases in secondary school.

Our F-2 students have also begun their book club, where we are exploring the text *Accidentally Kelly Street*, inspired by the 1990s song by Frente.

Ms K, Miss Murphy and all the students are very excited for the weeks ahead.

Ms K and Miss Murphy

STEAM & The Arts Update

We have launched into our STEAM lessons with Mrs Ower this week. Throughout the term we will have a four week focus on e-safety, an exciting STEM incursion in Week 6, and will finish up the term with a focus on teamwork and problem solving, where students will complete a different STEM challenge each week.

Students have brought home our school technology agreement, which will need to be signed and returned to school by February 15th. This outlines the school expectations and requirements for using technology at school. Please take the time to read through the document yourself, and with your children to make sure they understand it.

We are kicking off our year with a term of Visual Art with Mrs Ower. Each week students will start the lesson by spending a few minutes looking at two artworks by different artists and answering some questions to prompt thinking and reflection. This will expose them to different artists, styles and eras of art.

Our skills-based focus this term is Printmaking and Process Art, where students will learn about and practise different techniques and processes, with more of a focus on the making than the result. Trying new ideas and exploring different methods will be our aim, not producing 'perfect' or 'pretty' work. This may be a challenging concept for some students who are used to following instructions closely to produce something specific, but letting go of expectations will allow them to explore and experiment with their creativity. I can't wait to go along on this learning journey with them!

Mrs Ower

IMPORTANT: School Preparations for the Bushfire Season

Each year, to prepare for bushfires and grassfires, schools and early childhood services complete a range of activities.

The Department of Education runs an annual fire risk assessment of schools and early childhood services. They are allocated a category of risk (categories 0 to 4) and are published on the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR). Bungaree Primary School is a BARR Category 4 site.

All schools and early childhood services listed on the BARR and Category 4 list will close when a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast in their fire weather district.

When the Bureau of Meteorology provides public fire danger rating forecasts or fire weather warnings, they use fire weather district areas. In Victoria, there are 9 fire weather districts, which are based on Local Government Area boundaries. Our school is in the Central District.

As part of preparing our school for the fire season, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan, and with the help of our school families through our Mowing Roster and Working Bees, and contractors where available, continue to stay on top of our vegetation management and maintenance works that assist in preparing for the threat of fire (such as clearing our grounds and gutters.)

What does this mean for our school?

Our school has been identified as being at risk of bushfire or grassfire and is a Category 4 school.

Our school will close on a day forecasted as a Catastrophic fire danger rating in the Central fire district.

What is the department's policy?

The department's *Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy* requires all schools and early childhood services on the BARR and the Category 4 list to close when a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast in their fire weather district. All school bus routes which travel in or through a district with Catastrophic fire danger must also be cancelled.

When will our school be closed due to Catastrophic fire danger?

Our school will close on a day forecasted as Catastrophic fire danger rating in the Central fire district.

Closure of the school due to a forecast Catastrophic day will be confirmed on the day prior and we will provide you with advice before the end of the school day. Any information regarding potential or confirmed Catastrophic fire danger days will be communicated to you at school pick up and on Compass.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, even if the weather forecast changes. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. It is also important to be aware that:

- No one will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Catastrophic day.
- Out-of-school-hours care (OSHClub) will also be cancelled on these days.
- All bus routes that travel through the Catastrophic area will be cancelled.
- School camps will be cancelled if a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast for fire weather district in which the camp is located, or if the travel involves passing through areas that have Catastrophic fire danger.



Families are encouraged to action their Bushfire Survival Plan on Catastrophic fire danger rating days. **On such days, children should never be left at home alone or in the care of older children.**

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) advises that when Catastrophic days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Catastrophic day.

What can families and the school community do to help us prepare?

- Ensure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers.
- Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters, checking our website (www.bungareeps.vic.edu.au) and Facebook page (@bungareeps), by talking to your child's teacher or staff members about our Emergency Management Plan.
- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed due to elevated fire danger or closed due to a Catastrophic fire danger. Further information can be found on the [CFA's website](#).
- Action your family's bushfire survival plan if your own triggers are met. Our school community may be spread out across many areas and some families may be at higher risk than others. Your family's safety is critical, so please let us know if you are actioning your bushfire survival plan and if your children will be absent on these days.
- If your child is old enough, talk to [them about bushfires](#) and your family's bushfire survival plan.

You can find more information on emergencies, warnings and preparedness actions here:

- VicEmergency app - that can be downloaded on your android and iOS mobile devices
- VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
- Website <https://emergency.vic.gov.au>
- Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency>)
- Twitter (<https://twitter.com/vicemergency>)
- ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters

Many thanks for your ongoing preparedness at home and here at school, and your continued support as we enter this bushfire season.

Miss Barnes

