



Birregurra Primary School Newsletter

'Living & Learning Together'

Term 1, Week 3 – 9th February 2026

Birregurra Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments. Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Child safety is a shared responsibility.

Our Vision

An inclusive community that supports and encourages a love of learning and the skills and mindset to thrive.

Our School Values

Community - growing positive partnerships between school, home and the broader community

Aspire - setting goals and purposefully working towards their achievement

Respect - for self, others, learning and our environment

Excellence - striving for the highest personal achievement in all aspects of schooling.

From the Principal's Desk



Welcome to Week Three! I hope everyone enjoyed the sunshine over the weekend and that our students are ready for another week of learning here at BPS. It has been wonderful to step into classrooms and see such high levels of engagement from our students so early in the school year. Last Tuesday, I had the opportunity to visit classrooms alongside the Area Director and Senior Education Improvement Leader, and we were impressed by the positive learning environments and the enthusiasm shown by our students. It is a great start to the year and a real credit to both our students and staff.

Thanks to those that were able to attend our Welcome BBQ last Wednesday. We were fortunate to have a lovely evening to get together and welcome in the school year. It was wonderful to mingle amongst new and familiar faces and catch up in an informal setting.

Parent Information Sessions

At Birregurra Primary School, we believe in keeping families well-informed and value the essential partnership between school and home. To start the year, we've scheduled two Parent Information Sessions. These sessions are designed to give parents an overview of how the learning program is structured and offer practical examples of how you can support your child's learning at home. It's also a wonderful opportunity to ask any questions you may have.

- P-2 Information Session: **TONIGHT** from 6:00-7:00 p.m.
- 3-6 Information Session: Monday, 16th February from 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Both sessions will take place in the Multi-Purpose Room. We look forward to seeing you there!

Parent Teacher Conversations

Parent/teacher conversations are scheduled to take place over the phone after school this **Tuesday 10th, and Wednesday 11th February** as well as next **Tuesday 17th, and Wednesday 18th February** from 3:30- 4:30pm. Teachers will call parents at the designated time. To secure your preferred time, please make a booking through the XUNO platform.

Parent/teacher conversations provide an excellent opportunity to engage in discussions regarding your child's adjustment to their new class and gather insights into their aspirations for the 2026 school year. We look forward to connecting with families.

2026 Student Leadership Roles

Our 3-6 students have been working on their leadership applications during class time, using the opportunity to develop their writing and public speaking skills. Regardless of whether they are applying for a position, this has been valuable practice for all students. Our Year 6 students will deliver their speeches to the school community this **Thursday 12th February @ 2:30pm** in the Multi-Purpose Room.



School Councillors – Rob Lidgerwood (President) Luke Fitzpatrick, Cassie Stephens, Kelly Dodds, Sarah Green, Emily McDonald, Alistair Burrell, Jaymie Lowe.

Students in Years 3, 4 and 5 will deliver their speeches to their respective classes. We are looking forward to hearing our young leaders speak about their personal qualities and skills and are confident they will all do a fabulous job. Parents are welcome to come along and listen to the Year 6 speeches.

Leadership positions will be announced at a special assembly on **Friday at 3:00pm**. Badges will be presented by our local policeman, Josh Goonan. Once again, all are welcome!

Polwarth & House Sports Dates



The date of our annual Polwarth Interschool Sports has been confirmed for **Friday 27th February**. We aim to provide families with as much notice as possible to assist with planning and arrangements.

For new families, the Polwarth Sports is a rural school sports day held at Alvie Primary School each year for all students Prep to Year 6. Students from seven local rural schools compete against each other in a range of athletic events. Students in the older year levels who perform well at the Polwarth Sports may qualify to progress to the Colac Division Athletics.

It is important that the Polwarth Sports are held prior to the Colac Division Athletics, as results from Polwarth determine student eligibility to progress to the Colac event. The Colac Division Athletics will take place on **Friday 20th March**.

Ideally, we would hold our own school House Sports prior to Polwarth. However, the Polwarth event is scheduled ahead of NAPLAN in March and, this year, Somers Camp for some students across our region. As a result, our House Sports will take place on **Friday 27th March**.

To prepare students for the athletics season, students will practise skills and events during their PE/Sport sessions with Mr King and will be supported by our House Leaders once elected.

Please note that the Polwarth Sports Day requires parents to transport their children to and from this event. This is because all staff arrive early at Alvie to assist with setup. All staff, including education support staff, are allocated roles on the day such as running events, officiating age groups, scoring, or first aid.

Families are very welcome to stay and enjoy the day, and we encourage you to bring along a picnic lunch. Please stay tuned for further details, including arrival and dismissal times.

Thanks

Over the past few weeks, we have had a number of grounds improvements take place around the school. A new timber paling fence has been installed near the basketball court and it looks fantastic. A massive thank you to Sarah Scott and Ben Surtees for their support in clearing the fence line at the end of last year to allow this work to happen. This was a big effort and very much appreciated. Thanks also to Dave Drayton for disposing of the green waste.

We would also like to say a huge thank you to Birregurra Plumbing for replacing the roof sheeting on the storage shed near the back gate. We really appreciate the ongoing support of our school community.

It is wonderful to see our school grounds continuing to be improved, and we are very grateful for the time, effort and support provided by members of our school community.



School Council Nominations

Nominations for School Council will open on **Monday February 16th**. Our existing School Council comprises 6 parent representatives, 2 staff representatives (in the school employee category), 2 optional community representatives, and the principal. Members of the School Council serve a two-year term, with the option to renominate at the conclusion of their term. Annually, three parent positions and one school employee position become available. Parent representatives with two-year term completed are:

- Kelly Dodds
- Luke Fitzpatrick
- Rob Lidgerwood

School Council Employee with two-year term completed:

- Jaymie Lowe

The School Council is obligated to convene a minimum of eight times per year, with meetings scheduled on Mondays at 6:30 pm. If you are interested in becoming involved, consider nominating yourself! A fact sheet providing detailed information about school council elections is attached to this newsletter for your reference.

[School Uniform Order form](#)

A reminder if you would like to purchase any uniform, please complete and return an order form to the school office by **Monday 16th February**. Uniforms must be paid for at the time of ordering. Payment can be made via cash, EFTPOS or direct deposit. Please indicate on the order form how you wish to pay.

If you have any questions about the uniform, please see Mrs Leigh in the office.

[Lunch Orders](#)

Lunch orders for 2026 will commence on **Friday 20th February**. Paper order forms will be sent home on Monday 16th February and must be returned by Wednesday 9:00 am. If you are available to join the roster and assist with distributing lunches to classrooms, please let us know by calling 5236 2222 or emailing birregurra.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

[2026 Team Victoria State Team Trials](#)

Nicole Lynch, Regional Sports Co-ordinator, has shared the following information for schools to pass on to their communities regarding State Sports trials.

Registrations are now open for children 12 years and under who are interested in trialling for the Victorian State Sports Teams. The SSV Team Vic program provides student athletes with the opportunity to represent Victoria and compete at the annual School Sport Australia Championships in a range of sports. SSV coordinate the selection process for Team Vic teams in partnership with relevant state sporting organisations.

This pathway is highly competitive and intended for students who are already performing at an advanced representative level beyond local competition. It is **not** designed as a developmental, preparatory, or 'come and try' opportunity. Students are required to check with the school principal or PE teacher for endorsement to go to the trials. View up-to-date information regarding 2026 Sport & Registration Dates on the SSV website under the Team Vic heading.

Please refer to the Team Vic [Student Endorsement](#) process for students nominating for the following teams in 2026:

- **Australian Football 12 Years & Under Boys** (Opens Friday 30th January and closes Monday 2nd March 2026)
- **Basketball 12 Years & Under Girls/Boys** (Opens Friday 30th January and closes Monday 2nd March 2026)
- **Football (Soccer) 12 Years & Under Boys** (Opens Friday 30th January and closes Monday 2nd March 2026)
- **Netball 12 Years & Under Girls** (Opens Friday 30th January and closes Monday 2nd March 2026)
- **Cricket 12 Years & Under Boys** (Opens Friday 30th January and closes Monday 2nd March 2026)

Information regarding registrations can be found at <https://www.ssv.vic.edu.au/team-vic>

[Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund \(CSEF\)](#)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum. CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school excursions, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or support an out of home care student you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid directly to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child. The annual CSEF amount per student is \$400 for all school students.

[HOW TO APPLY](#)

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below. If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

You only need to complete an application form if any of the following changes have occurred:

- **new student enrolments:** your child has started or changed schools this year.
- **changed family circumstances:** such as a change of custody, change of name, concession card number, or new siblings commencing this year.

Check with the school office if you are unsure. For more information about CSEF visit: <https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>

Staff Update

Miss Erskine will be taking leave to get married from Monday 23rd February to Tuesday 10th March. During this period, the Prep/1 class will be taught by Mrs Alison McDonald, who is a familiar face to many, having spent several years teaching Prep at Birre. We wish Miss Erskine all the best on this wonderful occasion and are delighted the students will be in such experienced and caring hands with Mrs McDonald.

Reminders

- PREP students do not come to school on Wednesdays throughout February.
- Please complete all start of year consent forms via XUNO by **February 28th**. Thanks to those that have already done this!
- Please provide an updated Asthma, Anaphylaxis and/or allergy plans as soon as possible – updated plans are required every twelve months.
- Uniform orders are due to the office by **Monday 16th February**.
- Students arriving after 9am should report to the office first to sign in as a late arrival.
- Please note that the school yard is not supervised until 8.40am each morning. We ask that students arrive after this time. Bookings are available for before school care at <https://theircare.com.au>.

If you have any questions, thoughts or concerns please don't hesitate to contact either myself, the office or your child's teacher. Positive home school partnerships and relationships ensure the best possible outcomes for your children.

Jess Kattwinkel & team

Dates for the Diary...

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Monday 9 th February | - Prep-2 Information Session 6.00pm to 7.00pm |
| Tuesday 10 th February | - Parent Teacher Conversations 3.30pm to 4.30pm |
| Wednesday 11 th February | - No Preps - Parent Teacher Conversations 3.30pm to 4.30pm |
| Thursday 12 th February | - Breakfast Club begins 8.15am - Senior Leadership speeches 2:30pm in the Multi-Purpose Room |
| Friday 13 th February | - Special Assembly – Leadership Presentations 3.00pm |
| Monday 16 th February | - Gr 3-6 Information Session 6.00pm to 7.00pm |
| Tuesday 17 th February | - Parent Teacher Conversations 3.30pm to 4.30pm |
| Wednesday 18 th February | - No Preps - Parent Teacher Conversations 3.30pm to 4.30pm |
| Thursday 19 th February | - Breakfast Club 8.15am |
| Friday 20 th February | - Assembly 2.45pm, Gr 4/5 Class Presentation |
| Monday 23 rd February | - School Council 6.30pm |
| Wednesday 25 th February | - No Preps |
| Thursday 26 th February | - Breakfast Club 8.15am |
| Friday 27 th February | - Polwarth Sports – Alvie Primary School |
| Thursday 5 th March | - Breakfast Club 8.15am |
| Friday 6 th March | - Assembly, Gr 3/4 Class Presentation |
| Monday 9 th March | - Labour Day Public Holiday – No Students at School |



Wishing the following
students a very

Happy
Birthday

February

9th Daisy F

13th Kate P



Birregurra
Primary School

Parent Teacher Conversations

Tuesday 10th February
Wednesday 11th February
Tuesday 17th February
Wednesday 18th February

3.30pm to 4.30pm

Bookings can be made
via XUNO.

Please contact the office
on 5236 2222 if you
have any queries.



Birregurra Junior Netball

Prep, Grade 1 and Grade 2: Term 2 Thursday afternoon Net Set Go skills sessions
(Some Grade 2s may play games on Friday nights)

Grades 3-6: Thursday night training and Friday night CDNA games (Friday night
games start Week 1, Term 2 and run til August)

Please sign up using this [link](#) by **Thursday 5th March 2026**.

Appendix A

Fact sheet 1: school council elections – information for parents

What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the broad direction of a school, in accordance with Ministerial Order 1280 Constitution of Government School Councils, and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. In doing this, a school council may directly influence the quality of education for students.

Who is on the school council?

For most primary school councils, there are several possible categories of membership:

- **A mandated elected parent member category** – members of this category generally comprise more than one third of the council's total membership. Department employees can be parent members at their child's school providing that they are not engaged in work at the school.
- **A mandated elected school employee member category** – members of this category make up no more than one-third of membership. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
- **An optional community member category** – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experience. Department employees are not eligible to be community members.
- A small number of school councils have nominee members.

For all schools with a Year 7 and above cohort, there is an additional category of membership:

- **A mandated elected student member category, two positions.**

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

Why is parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills and a range of experiences and knowledge that can help inform and shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

Do I need special experience to be on school council?

Each member brings their own valuable skills and knowledge to the role, however, in order to successfully perform their duties, councillors may need to gain some new skills and knowledge.

It is important to have an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

Code of conduct for school councillors

School councils in Victoria are public entities as defined by the *Public Administration Act 2004*.

School councillors must comply with the Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. The Code of Conduct is based on the Victorian public sector values and requires councillors to:

- **act with honesty and integrity** – be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and duty
- **act in good faith in the best interests of the school** – work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students foremost in their minds
- **act fairly and impartially** – consider all relevant facts of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and never act from self-interest
- **use information appropriately** – respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available

- **exercise due care, diligence and skill** – accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school
- **use the position appropriately** – not use the position as a councillor to gain an advantage
- **act in a financially responsible manner** – observe all the above principles when making financial decisions
- **comply with relevant legislation and policies** – know what legislation and policies are relevant for which decisions and obey the law
- **demonstrate leadership and stewardship** – set a good example, encourage a culture of accountability, manage risks effectively, exercise care and responsibility to keep the school strong and sustainable.

Indemnity for school council members

School councillors are indemnified against any liability in respect of any loss or damage suffered by the council or any other person in respect of anything necessarily or reasonably done, or omitted to be done by the councillor in good faith in:

- a. the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a councillor, or
- b. the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a council.

In other words, school councillors are not legally liable for any loss or damage suffered by council or others as a result of reasonable actions taken in good faith.

How can you become involved?

By participating in, and voting in the school council elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might consider:

- standing for election as a member of the school council
- encouraging another person to stand for election.

What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations in Term 1 of each year. Council elections must be completed by 31 March, unless varied by the Minister for Education.

If you stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or, you can nominate yourself in the parent member category. You can only be nominated by another member of the same category that you are eligible for (e.g. a member of the parent electorate may only nominate another parent of that electorate).

Department employees with a child enrolled at a school where they are not engaged in work, are eligible to nominate for parent membership at that school.

Return your completed nomination form to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt via post, email or by hand delivery.

Generally, if there are more nominations than vacancies a ballot will be conducted in the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

Remember

- Consider standing for election to school council.
- Ask the principal for instructions if you are not sure what to do.
- Be sure to vote if the election goes to ballot.
- Contact the principal if you are unsure about what is required at any stage of the election process.



This week I thought I'd share some information about a men's mental health and support website I came across, MensLine Australia.

MensLine Australia offer free counselling to men anywhere in Australia. They provide both online and telephone consultation services and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In addition to their counselling services, the MensLine website provides a range of advice on areas including:

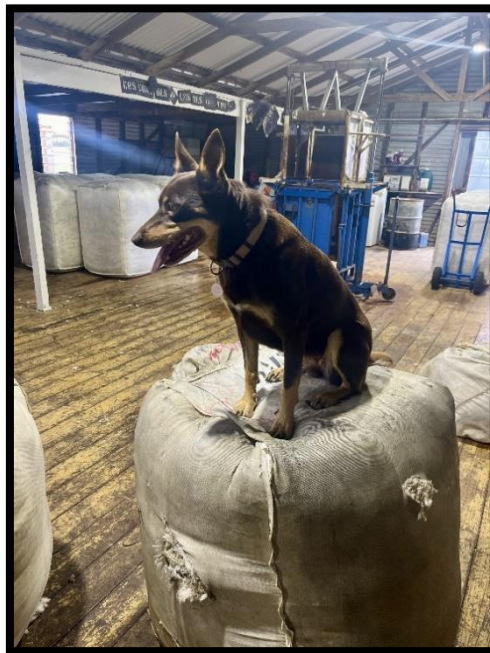
- How to break a negative thinking loop
- Managing anger
- How to become a better partner
- Divorce/separation
- Anxiety
- Stress

For more information head to [MensLine Australia](https://www.mensline.org.au)

[Pet Ownership - Much Loved Pets](#)

Last week in this column I included pictures of my dog Harley and wrote about the benefit pets can have on mental health. I also encouraged the community to share photos of their pets with me. If you have a photo of a pet you'd like to include in our newsletter, please email it through. We'd love to share it with the school community.

This week I have included a photo of Luna. Luna is Mrs K's much loved family and farm dog. She is a brown and tan Kelpie, five years old, and loves chasing sheep and stalking chickens. Check out Luna watching on in the shearing shed!



LUNA

- Mr King



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FEBRUARY
9TH-13TH
AT
AFTER-SCHOOL
CARE



A week-long Winter Olympics adventure filled with games, crafts, STEM challenges, and team spirit!

Kids will represent countries, compete in friendly "Silly Olympics", and celebrate together in opening & closing ceremonies.

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OCR FM OPEN STUDIO & RECORDING DAY

SATURDAY

14th
FEBRUARY

FROM
10AM TO 1PM

Drop in and check out behind the scenes at the radio station!

Plus take the opportunity to record an announcement for airplay!

Shop 6, Colac Tenpin Bowl Arcade
Email admin@ocrfm.org.au for further details



**4-WEEK
POP UP
BLAST**

Sign up to our 4-week action packed program!

With school returning, Cricket Victoria have Pop Up Blast programs starting across town over coming weeks!

Pop Up Blast programs are 3-5 weeks in length and provide a perfect opportunity for participants aged 5-10 to join in the fun following an action packed Ashes and Big Bash summer on TV!

Programs are at a discounted rate compared to regular Cricket Blast program and includes a participant pack.

Pop Up Blast programs within your area include:

Birregurra CC:

<https://www.playhq.com/cricke-t-australia/register/8f9d8d>

Colac District CA:

<https://www.playhq.com/cricke-t-australia/register/431cbc>



FESTIVAL OF SPORT

at KARDINIA PARK



FREE EVENT

LABOUR DAY LONG WEEKEND
FRIDAY 6TH MARCH
5PM - 8PM

PRESENTED BY



SUPPORTED BY



- 30+ interactive sporting activities
- Experience the thrill of playing on the field at GMHBA Stadium
- Enjoy entertainment and food trucks
- Connect with the local sporting community

WWW.FESTIVALOFSPORT.COM.AU