

BIRREGURRA



The A-Z Handbook

Birregurra Primary
School



Birregurra Primary School is a child safe place

Standard 1:

Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

Standard 2:

Ensure that child safety and wellbeing are embedded in school leadership, governance and culture.

Standard 3:

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 4:

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 5:

Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.

Standard 6:

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Standard 7:

Ensure that processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.

Standard 8:

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

Standard 9:

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

Standard 10:

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

Standard 11:

Policies and procedures that document how schools are safe for children, young people and students.

Ministerial Order 1359 provides the framework for child safety in schools.

PROTECT

Protecting children & young people
from abuse is our responsibility



Welcome to Birregurra Primary School

On behalf of the Birregurra Primary School community and the Birregurra Primary School Council, I extend a warm welcome to you and your family as you join our school. Enrolling with us means becoming an integral part of our learning community, where we collaboratively strive to nurture your child's holistic development and future as a learner. We recognise that the education we provide is not only a responsibility but also a privilege, as it is the greatest gift we can offer young minds.

Rest assured, by entrusting your child to our school, they will receive an education that caters to their overall wellbeing. Here at Birregurra Primary School, we firmly believe that a remarkable educational journey encompasses more than just academic accomplishments. It embraces creativity, curiosity, active engagement in a diverse curriculum, fostering friendships, promoting harmony among students, fostering a sense of enjoyment, embracing new opportunities, and cultivating open and inquisitive minds in an evolving world.

While this Information Booklet aims to address many of your queries and provide essential information for transitioning your child and family into our school community, please know we are here to guide and support you every step of the way. There will be many opportunities to engage with your teachers and the school during your child's first year of school and beyond. We are honoured to be partnering with you in this very important journey over the next 7 years.

With the combined efforts of enthusiastic students, dedicated staff, and committed parents, we are confident that your time at Birregurra Primary School will be both successful and enjoyable for children and parents alike.

Warm regards,

Jessica Kattwinkel

Principal

SCHOOL PROFILE

Established in 1864, Birregurra Primary School (BPS) is located 20 kilometres east of Colac, nestled in the scenic rural landscape of the Birregurra township. Our school comprises six classrooms, an Art Room, a Multipurpose Room, a Wellbeing Room, two ovals, a basketball court, and multiple playground areas.

Currently, we have 115 students enrolled, with approximately 20% of them commuting by bus. Our staffing includes 8.6 teaching staff, a full-time Principal and Business Manager, 2.75 Education Support staff, and a chaplain working three days a fortnight. We prioritise building the capacity of all our staff to enhance student engagement and achievement outcomes.

At Birregurra Primary School, we are dedicated to ongoing improvement across all aspects of our educational provision. While English and Mathematics remain central to our curriculum, we consistently strive to optimise learning opportunities for every student. Our Respectful Relationships curriculum plays a pivotal role in fostering the social and emotional development of our students.

As an integral part of the Birregurra community, our school has forged strong partnerships with parents and local community groups. These collaborations serve to enrich the learning experiences of everyone within our school community.

These factors all combine to make Birregurra Primary School a stimulating, flexible and happy environment where all children have the opportunity to develop the key social, academic and emotional competencies to be successful and happy life-long learners.

VISION AND VALUES

Our *Vision and Values* ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

Birregurra Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

To celebrate and embed our vision and values in our school, we:

- display posters and banners that promote our values in our school;
- celebrate our values in our school newsletter;
- provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values;
- discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies;
- explicitly teach Respectful Relationships program, linking to school values.

MOTTO

‘Living and Learning Together’

VISION - *our aspirations*

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

MISSION - *what we do*

In order to fulfil this vision, we nurture our students to:

- be independent lifelong learners who are well equipped to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world;
- think and learn through problem solving;
- achieve personal success and excellence;
- demonstrate ethical, social and environmental responsibility;
- be active, happy, engaged and productive citizens.

Birregurra Primary School's students experience high levels of engagement and wellbeing in an environment where they develop positive learning behaviours and dispositions that enable them to become successful lifelong learners.

All staff members support a positive learning culture, whilst designing learning experiences based on evidence based best practice. At Birregurra Primary School, we nurture a culture of trust enabling staff to openly question, collaborate, reflect and support one another. All staff accept shared responsibility for the academic success and general wellbeing of all students.

Family engagement and participation is an important element of the school's culture, improving student wellbeing and strengthening the importance of community to student learning.

VALUES

At Birregurra Primary School we are committed to four key values.

Our values utilise the acronym C.A.R.E:

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.

We apply these values in our everyday dealings with each other and in the development of our programs and policies. In our school community, these values are demonstrated when:

- students are encouraged to work cooperatively and collaboratively with their peers and other members of the school community, and to be active and responsible citizens.
- learners are at the centre of our teaching and learning;
- teaching and learning programs encourage deep understanding and a sense of the importance of learning;
- students have the opportunity to learn in a positive, caring environment and are encouraged to become self-motivated, life-long learners;
- all students are encouraged to achieve their personal best in all that they do;
- members of the school community show great confidence in one another and themselves.

SCHOOL CONTACT DETAILS

Street Address:	58 Beal Street, Birregurra 3242
Postal Address:	58 Beal Street, Birregurra 3242
Phone Number:	(03) 5236 2222
Website:	www.birregurraps.vic.edu.au
General Enquiries:	birregurra.ps@education.vic.gov.au
Principal:	jessica.kattwinkel@education.vic.gov.au
Business Manager:	kate.leigh@education.vic.gov.au

SCHOOL OFFICE OPENING HOURS

8.30am – 4.00pm *On school attendance days*

2026 TERM DATES

	START DATE		FINISH DATE	
TERM 1	Tuesday	27 th January	Thursday	2 nd April
TERM 2	Monday	20 th April	Friday	26 th June
TERM 3	Monday	13 th July	Friday	18 th September
TERM 4	Monday	5 th October	Friday	18 th December

2026 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS – during school terms

King's Birthday	Monday	8 th June
Melbourne Cup Day	Tuesday	3 rd November

PLANNED 2026 PUPIL FREE DAYS

All Government Primary Schools are entitled to determine four Pupil Free days per year. There will be two other curriculum days in 2025. These dates are yet to be confirmed.

Date	Purpose
Tuesday 27 th January	Staff Curriculum Day – Preparation for the year ahead
Friday 18 th December	Staff Curriculum Day

SCHOOL HOURS

Activity	Hours
Students arrive	8.40am
Bus Arrival Time	8:45am
Class start time	9:00 am
Recess	11:00-11:30 am (10 minutes eating 11.00am - 11.10am)
Lunch	1:30-2:15pm (10 minutes eating 1.30pm - 1.40pm)
Class Finish Time	3:15 pm
Bus departure time	3:20pm

STAFF

NAME	ROLE IN 2025
Jessica Kattwinkel	Principal
Kate Leigh	Business Manager
<i>Classroom Teachers</i>	
Genevieve Erskine	Prep
Jaymie Lowe	Grade 1/2L
Claudia McLaren	Grade 1/2M
Chloe Riseley	Grade 3
Alistair Burrell (Tue-Fri) / Gemma Welsh (Mon)	Grade 4/5
Madison Dillon	Grade 5/6
<i>Specialist Teachers</i>	
Brendan King	Physical Education (Prep-6)
Donna Williams	Art (Prep – 6) / STEAM (Gr 4-6)
Gemma Welsh	STEAM (Prep – 2) / Tutor Learning Initiative
Abbey Ritchie	Indonesian
Jack Simpson	Music (Prep-6)

Education Support Staff	
Bree Egan	Integration Aide
Kirsty Osborne	Integration Aide
Michaela Sultmann	Integration Aide
Harriette O'Hanlon	Integration Aide
Beth Marwood	Teacher Aide
Wellbeing	
Brendan King	Health & Wellbeing Leader
Sue Bath	Chaplain

SCHOOL READINESS

Many parents question when the right time is to send their child off to school or preschool, and when it is better to keep them back for another year.

Until the age of seven, children continue to have wide variations in their development. There is no one quality or skill that children need to do well in school, but a combination of things contributes to success. These include:

- good health and physical wellbeing
- social and emotional maturity
- language skills
- an ability to solve problems and think creatively
- general knowledge and awareness of their world.

What we must remember is that every child is an individual - each develops at a different rate, with some children being stronger in some areas than others.

At Birregurra Primary School, we anticipate that children will commence school possessing most of the following skills:

- action taken for identified vision, hearing, and dental problems;
- knowing their name and having a basic awareness of self, family, and community;
- being able to follow basic rules and routines;
- having a basic understanding of hygiene and being able to use the toilet and wash their hands;
- being able to tie shoes, do up buttons, zips, etc., or be in the process of learning these skills;
- being able to eat unassisted;
- being able to follow clear instructions, such as putting toys away when asked;
- developing gross and fine motor skills.

Immunisation

By law, your child must have an immunisation status certificate to enrol in primary school. The certificate is a statement showing which immunisations your child has received prior to starting school.

The School Entry Immunisation Status Certificate (SEISC) is the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) Child History Statement, issued when your child turns five, however you can request a statement from ACIR or from myGov online, at any time. The school keeps these records on file to assist quick identification of unimmunised children.

In the event of a disease outbreak, unimmunised children, can be quickly identified and excluded from school until the risk of infection has passed. If your child's immunisation status is unknown, then your child may be excluded as a precautionary measure.

Enrolling in primary school is a good time to ensure your child's immunisations are up to date. Children starting school are exposed to large numbers of people and to a range of potentially dangerous diseases. Immunisation is a proven and safe way to protect your child against vaccine-preventable diseases that cause serious illness.

Transitioning for Prep Students

Your child's transition to primary school should be a very positive experience. For this reason, at Birregurra Primary School we offer a thorough transition program. We believe it is essential that your child engages in all parts of the transition process to ensure a smooth and successful start to their primary school education.

To make your child's transition effective we recommend the following:

1. Parents and guardians undertake preparative activities outside the school;
2. Parents and guardians establish a relationship with the school Principal and Prep teacher;
3. Children attend all Prep transition days at the school (Term 4 the year prior to your child starting school);
4. Parents and guardians follow the support recommendations when your child starts school.

Preparing Your Child for School

The year before school

- Ask your child what they think about starting school.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about going to school.
- Help your child stay healthy. Make sure they have regular health and dental checks and keep immunisations up to date.
- Encourage children to do things on their own. This could be dressing, going to the toilet, washing their hands, unwrapping their food, opening/closing their drink bottle and lunchbox.
- Talk to friends and other families about what school is like.
- Talk to your child's preschool teacher about home activities that may help your child.
- Regularly read to your child.

During the summer holidays

- Show your child where the school is and talk about how you will get there.
- Arrange play times with other families whose children will be going to the same school. It helps if your child knows children at their school at the start of prep.
- Practise the things your child will need to do to get ready for school (e.g. putting things in their bag, remembering to take a hat).
- Confirm before or after school care arrangements and explain these to your child.
- Be positive about starting school and enjoy your child's excitement.
- Consistently read to your child.

Establishing a relationship with the school

- Attend school open days, tours and information sessions.
- Introduce yourself to the Principal and classroom teacher. Expect them to ask you questions about your child and your family.
- Read all materials given to you relating to the school, especially your child's transitions, and ask questions if you need more clarity.

Enrolment and transition activities in 2025 for 2026 Prep enrolments

Activity	Date	Time	Purpose
Information sessions/tours of school	7 th May 2025	9.15	Enrolment packages including application form available.
	12 th May 2025	11:30	Opportunity to tour the school. Informal Question & Answer session with current prep teacher, Miss Genevieve Erskine.
Buddy Visit	TBA		Year 5 students travel to the preschool to meet their 2026 Prep buddies.
Transition Day #1	Friday 21 st November 2025	9.00 – 11.00	2 hour developmental play / familiarisation with school environment. School Tour
Transition Day #2	Friday 28 th November 2025	9.00 – 11.30	2.5 hour developmental play/ familiarisation with school environment. 30 mins playground
Transition Day #3	Tuesday 9 th December 2025	9.00 – 2.15	Developmental play/engagement in classroom activities. Students play and interact with buddies at recess & lunchtime.

HOW TO ENROL YOUR CHILD

Once you have decided to enrol your child into Birregurra Primary School, there is some paperwork to complete. The following explains the process for you:

Activity	Tick
Collect Enrolment Handbook and <i>Application to Enrol in a Victorian Government School Form</i> from preschool or Birregurra Primary School from the beginning of Term 2, 2025.	
Completed School Enrolment Form due to be returned to the school by Friday 22nd August .	
Complete Enrolment Form and include:	
Evidence of your child's date of birth (birth certificate, or, if they were not born in Australia, a passport or visa)	
Your contact, phone and address details, and that of any other parent, guardian and/or carer	
Doctor's and dentist's names and phone numbers	
Immunisation Status Certificate	
Health and welfare information	
Complete a Bus Enrolment Form (if a bus traveller)	
Complete a Local Excursion / Media Consent Form	
Organise the purchase of uniforms (uniform order form in Enrolment pack)	
Organise child minding for your child on Wednesdays during February 2026. Preps do not come to school on Wednesday for the first 4 weeks.	

ABSENCES

If your child will be absent from school, please notify their teacher using one of the following methods:

- Speak directly with the teacher
- Send a message via SeeSaw
- Use the XUNO for Parents app
- Call the school office on 5236 2222
- Email the school at birregurra.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Under the Department of Education's attendance guidelines, schools are required to account for every child's attendance each school day. To support this, we ask parents and carers to inform the school as early as possible if their child will be absent. If no explanation has been provided, an SMS notification will be sent via XUNO.

If your child will be absent for an extended period (e.g., due to a family holiday), please notify the school in advance. In such cases, a Learning Absence Plan will be developed to support your child's learning during their time away.

ASSEMBLY

Assembly is generally held every second week, depending on school commitments. Our student leaders organise and lead the assembly, where we celebrate student achievements and birthdays for the fortnight. Parents, toddlers, and other family members are warmly invited to attend. Assembly dates are published in the weekly school newsletter.

BELL TIMES

Students are asked to arrive after 8.40am each morning. This is when supervision in the yard commences.

- 8.45am School bus arrives
- 9.00am Classes commence
- 11.00am Recess
- 11.30am Classes
- 1.30pm Supervised lunch in classroom
- 1.40pm Lunch Recess
- 2.15pm Classes
- 3.15pm Dismissal



Parents are asked to collect students at 3.15pm each day. Bus travellers leave the school at approximately 3.20pm.

BIKE SHED

Our bike shed is located at the back of the school beside the basketball court. Students are required to place all bikes, scooters, and helmets in the bike shed during the school day. Additionally, students must walk their bikes/scooters in the schoolyard. For students riding or scooting to and from school, wearing a helmet is mandatory.

BUS TRAVEL

Any children on the current bus route may travel on the bus if they meet the eligibility criteria set out by DET. Parents must advise the school in writing if the bus routine for your child is to change at any time. *The school must be informed prior to 3pm if your child is not travelling on the bus on any particular day to ensure adequate time for changes to be communicated.* Bus rules, as outlined below, must be adhered to by all students.

Bus Travel Expectations:

1. Students are expected to wait quietly at the bus stops.
2. Students are to always behave respectfully.
3. Students are to remain seated throughout the bus route.
4. Students are to communicate quietly.
5. Bus travel is a privilege not a right!

BOOK CLUB

The school participates in the Scholastic Book Club twice a term. There is no membership fee, and you are not obligated to purchase any of the books offered. Each child will receive their individual order form, presenting a selection of high-quality books at reasonable prices. To place an order, simply fill out your child's form and return it along with the correct payment to the school by the specified due date or order via the scholastic loop app. We believe that owning books is a unique experience, and there's no better way to foster a love for reading than by having children own their own books.

BUDDY PROGRAM

Each year, our prep students are paired with Grade 6 students through our Buddy Program. We firmly believe in the importance of fostering connections among all our students, and this program serves as a vital tool for facilitating a seamless transition into primary school life.

Buddy programs entail pairing older children with younger ones, aiming to provide support and guidance during the early stages of schooling. These connections not only offer practical assistance but also foster a sense of belonging within our school community.

To learn more about the benefits and implementation of Buddy Programs, you can explore the resource provided by the Victorian Department of Education via the following link:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/professionals/learning/trkpp6.pdf>

CAMPS

As part of our Outdoor Education program, students in years 3 - 6 participate in a camping program. Camps provide opportunities for students to step out of their comfort zones, fostering personal growth and resilience. They often involve activities that encourage decision-making and teamwork. Camps are also a great opportunity to facilitate social interaction in a less structured environment than the classroom, allowing students to develop interpersonal skills, build friendships, and learn to work collaboratively with peers. Further details will be given to those children involved during the school year.

LUNCH ORDERS

In 2025, students have the opportunity to order their lunch every Friday (Terms 1, 3 & 4), with meals prepared onsite by one of our dedicated mums and her team of helpers. Lunch order forms are sent home each week and must be returned to school by Wednesday.

CHILD SAFETY / STUDENT WELLBEING

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 views respected, and 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. We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect. We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

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 lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety. We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

If you wish to volunteer at Birregurra Primary School in any capacity – camps, parent helpers, excursions etc., it is essential that you have a current Working with Children Check. These are easy to obtain via the WWCC website. Once you have your card, please bring it to the office so that we can photocopy for our files. If you already have one, you might like to bring in and photocopy for the file.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS & RESTORATIVE PRACTICES

At the core of our community spirit lies a dedication to collaboratively striving for the best possible outcomes. As a member of the Birregurra Primary School community, we expect:

- relationships among families, the school team, and students to be treated as partnerships;
- a willingness to approach challenges with an open mind, seeking positive solutions together;
- respectful communication among all members of the community;
- recognition of the teaching team as professional educators, with their expertise supported in educational decision-making processes.

To uphold these principles, we employ restorative practices. This approach entails resolving any upsets, disputes, or challenges directly with the involved parties, fostering a collective willingness to work toward resolution. This process, which also involves students, is fully facilitated to ensure all

parties feel supported and have the opportunity to express their concerns in a safe environment. The only exception to this practice is when a situation poses a risk of harm to any party involved. Otherwise, active participation in restorative practices to address conflicts is an expected commitment from all members of our community.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

To facilitate effective communication with parents and uphold our dedication to sustainability and waste reduction, the school primarily communicates through the email addresses provided by parents. Should you require information through alternative channels, please notify us accordingly, and we will accommodate your request. The various communication channels available are outlined in the table below. We expect families to review the information sent by the school promptly and to reach out with any concerns or queries they may have.

Communication Channel	Purpose
School Email	The School Office sends email notifications to families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ General whole school notifications (reminders, event information, etc.) ➤ Health notifications ➤ Families can email the school to advise of absences, request appointments, etc.
Newsletter	A weekly newsletter is emailed and sent out via XUNO to families. The newsletter contains information and reminders such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Principal News ➤ Upcoming event information ➤ Class news ➤ Student recognition ➤ Community news/ads.
Phone calls	Families can phone the school office with enquiries or in case of an emergency.
Website	www.birregurraps.vic.edu.au Contains eNewsletter access, general information about the school, the parent handbook, policies and relevant reports.
XUNO App	XUNO provides instant two-way communication between parents/caregivers and Birregurra PS. The quick post acts like a text, with live instant alerts sent to any mobile device. It provides access to eNewsletter, events calendar, online absentee form, subscription to email, images in and around the school and much more.
Annual School Report	Each May, the school publishes the Annual Report for the previous year on the school website. This report is a wealth of information on the school's progress.
Parent Meetings	Parents are encouraged to reach out to their child's teacher either via email or phone to schedule a face-to-face meeting as needed. However, it's important for parents to be aware that teachers often have prior commitments and meetings scheduled throughout the day and week, so scheduling may require a few days' notice.

Parent / Teacher Conversations	Parent-teacher conversations occur termly. In Terms 1 and 3, these are conducted via telephone; in Term 2, they are face-to-face; and in Term 4, they are available upon request. These conversations allow teachers to discuss with parents how their child is progressing in all aspects of their schooling. Twice a year, you will receive a written report about your child's progress.
Seesaw App	Seesaw is a student driven digital portfolio. It empowers students of all ages to create, reflect, collaborate and share what they are learning at school. Families are provided with a link to their child's folder. Messaging is also available on the Seesaw app.

CAMPS, SPORTS, and EXCURSIONS FUND

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school trips, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

In 2025, the annual CSEF amount per student is \$154 for primary school students.

CURRICULUM

Overview

At Birregurra Primary School, we have created a dynamic learning community that provides the opportunity for all young people to flourish within a supportive and caring environment, with high expectations for learning and behaviour. We want our students and their families to know we are committed to achieving the best outcomes for their child.

The Victorian Curriculum guides our planning, assessment and reporting. The curriculum design, learning experiences and overall learning environment focus on fostering the skills and mindset of self-directed, lifelong learners. Teachers explicitly plan to give all students the opportunity to be successful learners who can apply/integrate new knowledge and skills across learning areas, with 21st century capabilities woven through all learning experiences. Specialist teachers conduct Art, STEAM, Indonesian, Physical Education and Music classes.

Student learning is further enriched through programs including Social and Emotional Learning (Respectful Relationships, Berry Street Education Model, and Mindfulness), Human Development, Junior School Council, Concert, Camping, Sporting Schools and Interschool Sport. A Chaplain works closely with our welfare team to provide support for our staff, students and parents.

Victorian Curriculum – Key Areas and Capabilities

As a Victorian Government school, we are required to deliver the Victorian Curriculum F–10, which outlines both the knowledge and skills students are expected to learn. These are organised into learning areas and capabilities. The curriculum is designed to ensure that knowledge and skills are transferable across subjects and not unnecessarily duplicated.

For example, skills such as asking questions, evaluating evidence, and drawing conclusions—taught within the Critical and Creative Thinking capability—are not repeated separately in other learning areas like History or Health and Physical Education. Instead, students are expected to develop, practise, apply, and demonstrate these skills through their learning across the entire curriculum.

The design of the Victorian Curriculum F–10 is set out below:

Learning Areas	Capabilities
The Arts	Critical and Creative Thinking
➤ Dance	
➤ Drama	Ethical
➤ Media Arts	
➤ Music	Intercultural
➤ Visual Arts	
➤ Visual Communication Design	Personal and Social
English	
Health and Physical Education	
The Humanities	
➤ Civics and Citizenship	
➤ Economics and Business	
➤ Geography	
➤ History	
Languages	
Mathematics	
Science	
Technologies	
➤ Design and Technologies	
➤ Digital Technologies	

Learning Areas

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 learning areas reflect a clear and deliberate commitment to a discipline-based approach to learning. These areas are both enduring and dynamic.

Their enduring nature lies in the distinct ways each discipline helps students understand the world and develop associated skills. Each learning area offers a unique perspective for seeing, understanding, and engaging with the world.

Capabilities

The Victorian Curriculum F–10 includes capabilities, which are a set of discrete knowledge and skills that can and should be taught explicitly in and through the learning areas but are not fully defined by any of the learning areas or disciplines. The four capabilities in the Victorian Curriculum F–10 are:

- Critical and Creative Thinking
- Ethical
- Intercultural
- Personal and Social

There is considerable research that identifies the importance of the teaching Literacy, Numeracy and ICT in the context of the different curriculum areas. It is both appropriate and necessary that the literacy, numeracy and ICT requirements be embedded in the curriculum areas.

Literacy

While much of the explicit teaching of literacy occurs in the English learning area, it is strengthened, made specific and extended in other learning areas as students engage in a range of learning activities with significant literacy demands.

Literacy practices are embedded in the aims of the Victorian Curriculum, English 2.0. Students learn to:

- listen to, read, view, speak, write, create and reflect on spoken, written and multimodal texts across a range of contexts;
- appreciate, enjoy and use the English language and understand its potential to communicate for a range of purposes;
- understand how Standard Australian English works in spoken and written form and in combination with non-linguistic forms of communication to create meaning.

While literacy is one of the Strands of the Victorian Curriculum F–10: English, each of the three strands address various literate practices that students must develop and demonstrate.

- In the Language strand, students develop their knowledge of the English language and how it works.
- The Literature strand engages students in the study of literary texts of personal, cultural, social and aesthetic value.
- In the Literacy strand, students make meaning through application of skills and knowledge from the Language strand.

The strategies also incorporate the different language modes (Speaking and Listening, Reading and Viewing, and Writing). While literacy permeates all areas of the curriculum, students are engaged in focused literacy learning in a daily two-hour integrated literacy block that incorporates explicit teaching of the skills of Reading and Viewing, Speaking and Listening, and Writing.

Sounds Write

At Birregurra Primary school, we have a whole school approach to phonics, using the Sounds Write program. Sounds Write provides students with a highly structured instructional approach to teaching children to read and spell. It teaches the essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation. Daily structured 'mini lessons' support students to read and spell words with a focus on letter formation and handwriting. Throughout Grade One and Two, students will begin to learn the

basics of morphology, this includes learning where the words have originated from, their meanings and understanding prefixes and suffixes.

Daily Review

The Daily Review helps students consolidate their understanding and build fluency in essential literacy concepts. It also ensures they have the prerequisite skills needed for the day's lessons, boosting their confidence through consistent and sequenced practice.

Fluency

Fluency is an essential component of early reading instruction due to its strong relationship with reading comprehension. While effective phonics instruction fosters efficient word reading, it does not always lead to automatic text reading fluency. Fluency sessions include modelled, shared, choral, and echo reading, as well as partner reading activities, all of which help develop accuracy and prosody (reading with expression).

Handwriting

Handwriting is a vital skill that benefits from regular practice. Each day, time is allocated to developing and refining students' handwriting abilities, focusing on correct letter size, formation, and placement on lines. Clear and legible handwriting allows students to share their work confidently with others, fostering a sense of pride in their achievements.

Text Based Units

Text-based units are a great way to help students develop skills and knowledge that link to the language and literature components of literacy simultaneously. There is a strong and consistent body of evidence demonstrating the impact of high-quality texts on students' literacy outcomes. At BPS we are committing to developing a text rich curriculum that is intentional and sequential, with the view to build knowledge, vocabulary, and exposure to/ability to access a range of complex texts.

The units provide opportunity for the following:

- Comprehension monitoring (students are taught how to become aware of when they do not understand and what to do about it).
- Graphic organisers and story mapping (students are taught/provided visual scaffolds for text structure and sequencing).
- Question answering (students respond to carefully developed questions from the teacher).
- Question generation (students are taught how to develop their own questions about the text during reading).
- Summarising (students are taught how to remove redundant or less important information/they are taught how to focus on what is most relevant).
- Using multiple strategies at once (reciprocal teaching – predicting, clarifying, questioning, summarising).
- Cooperative learning (using strategies in small groups rather than with the teacher).
- The units incorporate key elements including text level reading, text level writing, vocabulary and sentence level writing and reading fluency, linking reading and writing.

Reading

Students will engage in a range of reading activities throughout the week, including 'partner reading,' 'listening to reading,' 'word work,' and small-group teacher focus sessions.

Mentor texts model reading strategies and print conventions, while teacher-led small group sessions provide targeted instruction using carefully selected texts to extend learning.

Reading at home is encouraged daily and can include a variety of texts, such as storybooks, factual texts, comics, games, newspapers, and magazines, to nurture a love of literature. In Prep, Grade 1, and Grade 2, take-home readers will include a *Dandelion Launchers* or *Dandelion Readers* book to reinforce the sounds learned at school. Grade 1 and Grade 2 students will also take home a self-selected text from our Book Boxes. These books will be familiar and/or very easy to read, designed to be enjoyed for fun while increasing exposure to more complex vocabulary. Their primary purpose is to build reading confidence and fluency through easy, interest-based reading. All children are encouraged to engage in reading at home every day as part of their daily routine.

Writing

Children are encouraged to write for real purposes every day. They need explicit instruction in writing, beginning in the early years. Sentences are the building blocks of all writing, with structured lessons on sentence structure and building stamina through 'Quick Writes'. Students will also engage in meaningful writing activities throughout the text-based units.

Numeracy

Numeracy has never been more important. The rapidly evolving nature of knowledge, work and technology, demands stronger understanding, reasoning, strategic and problem-solving skills.

Numeracy is the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that students need in order to use mathematics in a wide range of situations. It involves recognising and understanding the role of mathematics in the world and having the dispositions and capacities to use mathematical knowledge and skills purposefully.

In the Victorian Curriculum F–10, the knowledge and skills that underpin numeracy, are explicitly taught in the Mathematics strands Number, Algebra, Measurement, Space, Statistics (commencing at Foundation Level C), Probability (commencing at Level 3) and reinforced and further exemplified in and across other curriculum areas.

An expectation of mathematical proficiency has been embedded into curriculum content across all strands to ensure that students develop mastery in mathematics through the development and application of increasingly sophisticated and refined mathematical understanding and fluency, reasoning and problem-solving skills. The concepts, skills, procedures and processes essential to the learning of mathematics are organised under the 6 interrelated strands, in a sequence of development that increases in depth and breadth across the years of schooling.

Information and Communications Technologies

In the Victorian Curriculum F–10, the ICT general capability skills are either specifically embedded in the content descriptions of Mathematics, Media Arts, Geography, English, and Digital Technologies, or schools have the flexibility to determine how these skills will be used in their teaching and learning programs for other curriculum areas.

Staff at Birregurra Primary School use technology to enhance teaching and learning. All classrooms have flat-screen TVs with access to the Internet. Additionally, all classrooms are well-equipped with technology linked to the school's secure network. Children in Years Prep through to Grade 2 have access to 1:1 iPads, while students in 3-6 have 1:1 Notebooks. The school also has a WebEx unit enabling students and staff to connect to other schools and places for learning. We are extremely fortunate that School Council and Parents and Friends fundraising activities enable our students to access up-to-date technology.

Developing a Reading Culture

Throughout the curriculum, it is extremely important to develop a strong reading culture. Exposing your child to diverse vocabulary through language experience and reading from an early age has a significant effect on their learning outcomes throughout their lifetime.

At Birregurra Primary School, we recognise the critical importance of fostering a strong reading culture where children develop the skills and have access to resources that enable them to cultivate a genuine love of reading.

There is compelling data on the benefits of encouraging your child to read:

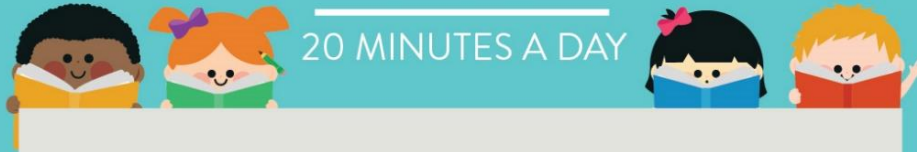
- Helps in language development: From the time your child is born, reading aloud is a positive influence. As your child grows, daily reading helps the brain make connections between the written and spoken word, thereby expanding vocabulary.
- Additionally, vocabulary knowledge correlates with proficient spelling. In fact, reading, spelling, and vocabulary are crucial to a child's lifelong achievement.
- Promotes brain development: Educators have long asserted that reading makes people smarter, and research supports this claim. A study conducted by the American Academy of Paediatrics found that reading to children of any age stimulates several regions in the left part of the brain, including those involved in understanding word meanings and concepts tied to memory.
- Aids in understanding the world outside our own: Reading transcends mere translation of written words into verbal form; it involves understanding that those words were once ideas in the minds of great thinkers. It is about realising that these ideas can be connected to personal experiences.
- Daily reading exposes children to a world beyond their reality, expanding their knowledge, broadening their minds, and fostering a wealth of ideas and possibilities.

During learning time at Birregurra, children are taught how to read and comprehend texts. Learning experiences are designed at their instructional level or point of need, where they acquire specific skills to aid their learning.

Establishing reading routines at home early on is crucial for your child's development as a reader. One of the most important things you can do for your child is to establish a routine where they read for at least 20 minutes every day.

READ

20 MINUTES A DAY



STUDENT A
reads at home


20
min/day

STUDENT B
reads at home


5
min/day

STUDENT C
reads at home


1
min/day

THEY WILL HEAR

1,800,000

282,000

8,000

WORDS PER YEAR

THEY WILL HAVE READ FOR

851

212

42

HOURS BY 6TH GRADE

AND ON STANDARDIZED TESTS,
THEY WILL LIKELY SCORE BETTER THAN

90%

50%

10%

OF THEIR PEERS

Source: <http://readdbq.org/2014/11/19/read-20-minutes-day/>

STEAM

STEAM is an approach to learning and development that integrates the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

Through STEAM, students develop key skills including:

- problem solving
- creativity
- critical analysis
- teamwork
- independent thinking
- initiative
- communication and
- digital literacy.

STEAM is immensely important as it equips individuals with the essential skills to thrive and adapt in our rapidly evolving world. The ongoing advancements in technology are reshaping how students engage, learn, and collaborate on a daily basis. The skills cultivated through STEAM education lay a solid foundation for students to excel both academically and in their future endeavours.

Art

Art classes are held weekly throughout the school year. During Art lessons, students explore the world of visual representation and expression. They experiment with a wide range of art materials, influences, styles and mediums such as drawing, painting, printmaking, collage, textiles and sculpture. Our students are encouraged to communicate through their art and in turn, respond to the artworks of others. Much of the artwork produced by our students is proudly displayed at school.

Language (Indonesian)

Indonesian is the Language Other Than English (LOTE) program offered at Birregurra Primary School in 2025. During weekly Indonesian lessons, students have the opportunity to:

- practice and meaningfully use the language in authentic situations;
- understand the cognitive, social, and practical benefits of learning a language;
- use the language they are learning for authentic, meaningful purposes.

Physical Education

We are fortunate to have exceptional facilities that enable us to offer a diverse range of Physical Education (PE) programs. Led by a specialist PE teacher, our students engage in skill-based programs covering a variety of sports including football, soccer, ball skills, tennis, athletics, and more.

In addition to our regular PE curriculum, our school hosts annual House Sports events organised by our dedicated House Captains. Our students eagerly participate in the Polwarth Sports Athletics Program, where seven small schools converge to compete across seven athletic disciplines.

Our students also have the opportunity to participate in sporting events at local, divisional, regional, and even state levels, provided they qualify. This broad spectrum of sporting opportunities ensures that our students can pursue their athletic interests and aspirations to the fullest extent possible.

Music Program

Birregurra Primary School is dedicated to delivering a high-quality music program to every student. We firmly believe that music serves as a powerful mode of learning, facilitating creative expression and enabling students to communicate in diverse ways.

Our music program is conducted weekly in the Multi-Purpose room. We are also proud to offer private 1:1 piano lessons and 1:1 guitar lessons through external providers.

Throughout the year, events such as the Graduation Concert, annual Talent Quest, and assemblies offer excellent platforms for our students to exhibit their talents and achievements.

CURRICULUM DAYS

Schools are permitted four School Council-approved Curriculum Days each year. Generally, the first and last days of the school year are designated as Curriculum Days. Children do not attend school on these days. During Curriculum Days, teachers engage in professional learning activities aligned with the goals outlined in the school's Strategic Plan. In 2026, the first and last days of the school year will serve as Curriculum Days. Information regarding the remaining two Curriculum Days will be disseminated through the school newsletter.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS/ INFORMATION

It is crucial that the details in our records are kept up to date at all times to ensure we can reach you when necessary. To assist both staff and your child, please ensure the school has the following information:

- (a) Home address and phone number
- (b) Business number
- (c) Name, address, and phone number of a person who can care for your child in your absence, in case of illness or accident during school hours
- (d) Current medical information regarding your child.

In case of an emergency, we may need these contacts if parents cannot be reached. Please ensure that the nominated emergency contacts are aware of their designation and consent to their details being provided to Birregurra Primary School.

EXCURSIONS

Throughout the year, children participate in a range of cultural and educational excursions deemed educationally valuable by the staff. Ample notice regarding excursions and associated costs will be provided to parents. In February, parents will be requested to return the Birregurra Primary School Local Excursion Agreement 2026, which pertains to excursions within the local town area.

FRUIT BREAKS

Each class has a regular, healthy fruit break during the morning session. Students are asked to bring fruit or vegetable snacks in a separate container to eat during this time.

FUNDRAISING

Each year Birregurra Primary School aims to raise funds to support our digital technology program and/or school grounds. This is achieved through different fundraising events approved by the School Council.

HEALTH CARE MANAGEMENT AT SCHOOL

First Aid Procedures

Any student who becomes ill/injured during the school day must initially report to a class/duty teacher and then report to the office where they will be attended to. From there, students will return to class or a parent/guardian, or listed emergency contact, will be notified to arrange transport home.

Please ensure that the school office always has the most current home and mobile telephone numbers and email address for your preferred contact. The emergency contact person should be someone that is available to collect your child from the school if the parent/guardian is unable to do so. Please ensure the emergency contact is aware of their role. Your child should be collected as soon as possible after the school has contacted you. We cannot provide long-term bed care for students.

Under NO circumstances is a student to contact home and arrange to be collected OR leave the school without permission.

In the event of a medical or other emergency involving a student, if communication with parents is impossible or impractical, the school may take necessary action deemed to be in the best medical interests of the student, even if it incurs expenditure. Parents are accountable for any medical expenses incurred for such treatment or advice regarding injuries.

While the school will exercise reasonable care for students experiencing accidents or illness, it will not be directly or indirectly responsible for any actions or oversights of medical or dental practitioners or medical officers attending to or treating the student.

First aid medical supplies are only provided for injuries or incidents that occur at school.

Student Hospitalisation

If a student requires transport to hospital because of illness or injury, by either private vehicle or ambulance, the school will endeavour to have a staff member accompany that child to hospital and remain with them until a parent or guardian arrives.

Ambulance Cover

The school does not cover the costs of an ambulance if it is required for your child in an emergency. In the event of an accident or incident at school necessitating urgent medical attention, every effort will be made to contact parents. However, if an ambulance is deemed necessary, the school will arrange for the student to be transported to the hospital via ambulance. The costs incurred will be the responsibility of the parent or caregiver. We strongly recommend purchasing ambulance cover for your family.

Anaphylactic/ Life Threatening Medical Conditions

In the case of anaphylactic students, parents are required to provide documentation from their doctor / Allergist (ASCIA form), as well as medication that is clearly labelled by a pharmacist.

All medications required during school hours must be listed on the **Medical Authority Form** available from the office.

Each student who is at **risk of anaphylaxis** is required to have a management plan that has been developed in consultation with the parents/guardians and medical practitioner. Prevention strategies for each student at risk of anaphylaxis must be developed for both in school and out of school settings.

Emergency Health Care Plans

Emergency Health Care Plans are generated for students who may require medication or actions for medical conditions such as epilepsy, haemophilia, diabetes, anaphylaxis or severe allergic reactions. A doctor's letter is required outlining the medical condition and any specific actions that may need to be taken. From that information an Emergency Health Care Plan will be drawn up and signed by a parent/guardian to confirm that the details are correct. This plan will be attached to your child's school records. Parents/Guardians will also need to provide this information again when your child attends school excursions or camps. The school must be notified if there are any changes in the management of a student's condition.

Asthma and Asthma Medications

Parents are required to submit a copy of an **Asthma Action Plan**, completed by a doctor, to the school office.

The school requires that Asthma medication (e.g. inhalers, spacers etc.) are supplied by parents; that they have not expired and that they are clearly labelled by a pharmacist. All inhalers are to be labelled appropriately and stored in a named container.

Emergency Health Care Plans will be generated for students who may require additional medication or actions in case of acute asthma.

Medications at School

The school is very conscious of its responsibilities when a student requires medication. In accordance with legal and safety requirements **students are not permitted to keep medication on their person or in their locker or bag; nor are they permitted to administer any medication to other students.**

Parents/guardians undertake the following in relation to the administration of medication and/or management of health concerns:

- Medication is to be provided in the original container with Pharmacist dispensing label attached, clearly stating the student's name, name of medication, dose and time to be administered. It is also necessary to complete a **Medical Authority Form**. The medication is then to be handed to the school office or teacher. They will be held in the office available for use by your own child under supervision.
- Notify the school in writing when a change of dose is required. The instruction is to be accompanied by a letter from a medical practitioner.
- Ensure the medication is not out of date.
- Self-medication is not permitted. On occasion, there may be special circumstances for an exception to this rule, and it would require the permission of parents/guardians.

General Wellbeing

We are concerned for each student's total wellbeing. Students should not be sent to school when they are unwell or within 24 hours of having a fever, vomiting or diarrhoea. If this occurs, students will be sent home.

It is important that your child have a nutritious breakfast before school. It is difficult to concentrate on their lessons on an empty stomach. Breakfast Club is available every Thursday in 2024.

Infectious Diseases

Infections spread quickly at school. Accordingly, the Health Department exclusion table should be followed if your child contacts any of the diseases listed here-

<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/infectious-diseases/school-exclusion-table>

Head Lice

It is school policy that children must be kept away from school until their hair has been effectively treated for head lice. When a student is identified with live head lice at school, they will be given a note at the end of the day to inform their parent/carer that their child may have headlice. Please notify the school if your child has head lice. Information on the treatment of head lice is available from the school office.

Sun Safety and Care

BPS recognises the need for children and staff members to be safe whilst in the sun. The Sun Smart Policy applies from mid-August through to 30th April. Therefore:

- All children must wear hats whilst playing outside if the UV factor is above 3.
- Students without hats will play in the shaded areas.
- We ask that parents put sunscreen on their child before school (this allows time for sunscreen to soak into skin and have optimum performance once child is exposed to the sun)
- Sunscreen will be available in each classroom and at the office for use by students at any time. (Please notify school if you have a sunscreen you would prefer your child use)
- Teacher will apply sunscreen on students in Prep on written request from parents.
- In all other classes, parents are to make their children aware of where the sunscreen is kept and how to apply it themselves when necessary.

LEARNING DIARY

The Learning Diary is an important communication tool between home and school and is used by all students from Prep to Grade 6. Students are expected to record their daily reading in this diary. This allows teachers to celebrate home learning successes. Please check your child's diary each night and ensure that it is returned to school daily.

LEARNING SHOWCASE

In June, we host a "Learning Showcase" from 3:15 pm to 5:15 pm. This event offers families the chance to visit the classroom and discuss with their child/ren the learning activities they've accomplished throughout the first semester and also share how the classroom functions.

LOST PROPERTY

Lost Property is stored in a laundry basket near the front office and at the end of each term there will be an appeal to students and parents to collect items. Students and parents are welcome to check through the items collected at any time. Items not claimed and unnamed will be placed in second hand uniform or taken to the local Op Shop.

Please remember to label all clothing, hats, lunch boxes, towels, etc., and regularly check for faded names or if your child has accidentally taken someone else's belongings. This is crucial because labelled items are typically returned directly to the student when found.

MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

The multipurpose room is available during the school day for STEAM, physical education, music and cultural activities. It is also a space, which can be used for demonstrations, performances, assemblies, displays, wet day programs and whole school events. Our P.E. program is also held in the Multi-Purpose Room if an indoor space is required. It is also a space that is used to host Professional Learning activities for teachers across our Network schools.

OBJECTS NOT ALLOWED AT SCHOOL

Toys, Trading Cards, Slingshots, toy guns, knives and other dangerous items are not permitted at school at any time. The school does not endorse the use of roller skates or roller blades unless under the direct supervision of a parent to or from school. Additionally, bringing electronic games and sentimental items is discouraged, as the school cannot assume responsibility for any lost or damaged items.

OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC)

We are fortunate to offer families Outside School Hours Care through TheirCare. Before School Care is available from 7am Monday to Friday, with children being released to supervised care in the playground at 8:45am. After school care runs each school day from 3:15pm till 6pm.

All Birregurra Primary School children are able to attend our service, whether it is for care whilst parents are working or for the opportunity to support social skills development. Children are supported through a range of indoor, outdoor, group play and passive experiences. Breakfast is provided in the morning and a healthy afternoon tea in the afternoon.

Permanent and casual booking are available for both before and after school care. Please see below links for registration:

- To find out more on how to register your child/ren, visit <https://theircare.com.au/families/>
- Registration Page: <https://theircare.fullybookedccms.com.au/family/register>

PARENTS & FRIENDS

The Parents and Friends (P&F) serves as a supportive community for our school, aiming to foster parental and community involvement, strengthen connections between families, staff, and students, and raise funds to enrich our school programs.

The P&F actively contributes to sporting events, fundraisers, and various school activities. They generously offer their expertise during classroom sessions, volunteering at working bees, and parent evenings.

Joining our P&F group is an enriching opportunity to foster friendship and enhance the social fabric of our school community. We warmly invite you to attend our next meeting, where you can immerse yourself in our school ethos and contribute to our collective vision.

PARENT INFORMATION SESSIONS

Throughout the year, the school holds information sessions, which explain our unique educational model. Attending these sessions will deepen your understanding of teaching and learning at Birregurra Primary School. These information sessions are advertised on our website, in the newsletter and via the XUNO app.

PARENT SUPPORT

Although we employ people to carry out professional roles within the teaching and administration of our school, we also rely upon the generous volunteering of parents. Birregurra school community has always been blessed to have parents who have helped support the school in many ways. Without these contributions of time, energy, ideas and initiative, BPS would not have the facilities it does today.

Birregurra Primary School has seen much growth over the past few years and we are enthusiastic about nurturing the generous community already established around our school. Community involvement in the school not only ensures our continued growth and success, but it also provides an opportunity for meaningful participation in your child's education. In addition, children are encouraged by the practical displays of care and involvement of their parents.

We actively support, encourage and greatly appreciate any assistance you are able to give us with reading, covering books, gardening, breakfast club, sporting events etc. Children enjoy having parents, grandparents, etc. involved in any of the many opportunities available to assist the school.

PARENT / TEACHER CONVERSATIONS

Parent/Teacher conversations are conducted in the first few weeks of the school year and then approximately week 8 of each term but may be requested at other times by parents or teachers if needed. Term One conversations focus on parents providing the teacher with information about their child's individual social, emotional and academic needs. It also provides an opportunity for teachers to inform parents of how their child has settled into the school year. Parent/teacher conversations in other terms allow a conversation about progress and needs. Parents are welcome to make a time for one-on-one interviews with the classroom teacher anytime during the year.

PERSONAL ACCIDENT PROTECTION / AMBULANCE

Parents/guardians of students who do not have student accident insurance are responsible for covering the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including expenses for ambulance attendance/transport and any other transport costs. Parents/guardians have the option to purchase insurance policies from commercial insurers. It is crucial for all families to have ambulance cover, as neither the school nor the DET covers the cost of an ambulance if one is called.

PERSONAL PROPERTY

The Department of Education does not hold insurance for personal property brought to schools and has no capacity to pay for any loss or damage to such property. If your child has something of value, it is recommended that they do not bring it to school because we cannot guarantee the safety of personal items.

ROAD SAFETY

Walking/Riding

We encourage students to walk, scoot, or ride to school, and our school program is designed to reinforce and develop safety habits. Ensuring our children are aware of familiar safety rules is paramount to their wellbeing. It would be beneficial if you could also emphasise road safety rules at home. For instance, when walking to school, advise them to choose the safest route, point out safe places to cross the road, remind them to look both ways for approaching traffic, and encourage walking instead of running. Additionally, remind them to be cautious of cars reversing or turning.

Given the multiple entrances to our school, it's crucial for children to know exactly which one to use if they need to wait for you. Children under nine years old can ride their bikes to school if supervised by an adult. Ensure your child goes directly to and from school without stopping to play or explore unless they have your permission. Teach them never to talk to strangers or accept rides from anyone. It's imperative that **students wear helmets when riding or scooting**. This simple measure can greatly enhance their safety on the road.

Drop off/Pick up

Our school is a very busy drop off/pick up zone, especially as our enrolments increase. Please ensure that you drive safely when entering or exiting the school area. Drop off/pick up your child promptly and proceed to move on so that others can access the area smoothly. Additionally, please remind your child not to walk across the gravel areas in the back car park. Instead, they should use the designated path or the nature strip to reach the cars. Children are small and cannot be seen by drivers if they move behind parked cars.

SAFETY IN THE PLAYGROUND

While children are in the school ground between 8:40am and 3:15 pm they are under supervision. On wet and cold or extremely hot days, children will be supervised inside. There are two teachers on yard duty at recess and lunch times to ensure that all children feel safe and to provide a fast response to medical needs. Our motto for all interaction in the yard is to be 'SAFE, FAIR AND FRIENDLY'.

SCHOOL BUS SERVICES

The school offers a bus service to families with enrolled children. Students from kindergarten (minimum age 4 years old) to Year 6 are eligible to use these services. Priority is given to school students, and if capacity permits, eligible kindergarten children may also access the service. The school prioritises the safety of all passengers and drivers on the school buses. Students using the School Bus Service must adhere to the Code of Conduct protocols. Application forms for the School Bus Service are obtainable from the office.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

A well-informed and effective school council strengthens community confidence in the school and helps to build and secure the school's reputation. Our current school council has 6 parent representatives, 3 school employee representatives and 2 community representatives. The School Council meets twice a term and is responsible for:

- developing the school's education policy within state-wide guidelines;
- overseeing the school's finances;
- developing the school's Student Code of Conduct;
- assisting in the selection of the school principal when a permanent vacancy occurs, and making a recommendation about the appointment to the Director of Education;
- employing non-teaching staff e.g. cleaning contractors;
- reporting on an annual basis to the community on its achievements;
- developing and maintaining school buildings and grounds.

CURRENT OFFICE BEARERS:

EXECUTIVE OFFICER:	Jessica Kattwinkel (Principal)
PRESIDENT:	Rob Lidgerwood
MINUTES SECRETARY:	Kate Leigh
TREASURER:	Luke Fitzpatrick
DET REPRESENTATIVES:	Alistair Burrell, Jaymie Lowe
PARENT REPRESENTATIVES:	Emily McDonald, Cassie Stephens, Kelly Dodds, Sarah Green
COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES:	Vacant

School Council elections are held at the start of each school year. Members of the school community are welcome to attend School Council Meetings. If you would like more information, contact the School Council President, Principal or a member of council.

SCHOOL CURRICULUM CONTRIBUTIONS & CHARGES

Schools provide students with free instruction to fulfil the standard Victorian curriculum and we want to assure you that all contributions are voluntary. Nevertheless, the ongoing support of our families ensures that our school can offer the best possible education and support for our students.

Within our school this support has allowed us to provide an enriched learning and teaching program for every student in our school. The commitment from parents to contribute benefits students and results in improved achievement outcomes, wellbeing and engagement in learning. With the ongoing

support from our broader school community, we are able to provide a one-to-one digital learning device for all students Prep through to Grade 6.

At Birregurra Primary School, we design and develop our learning and teaching programs by drawing on the best educational knowledge and practices. Our goal is to provide students with broad and enriched opportunities that go beyond the requirements of the standard curriculum and government funding.

Birregurra Primary School Council manages the school budget to ensure that curriculum contributions and charges remain as low as possible for our families. We offer various payment methods, including cash, BPay, EFTPOS, or funds transfer for your convenience. Families holding Health Care Cards are eligible to receive the CSEF Grant, approximately \$150 per child, to assist with costs related to camps and excursions. Families facing financial difficulties can request alternative payment arrangements.

School accounts contain BPay details as well as direct deposit information. When sending money to school with your child for an excursion or other purposes, please place it in an envelope and clearly write your child's name, grade, and the purpose of the money on the outside. This ensures accurate processing and allocation of funds.

Prep- 2 Contributions - 2025

Category	Totals
Curriculum Contributions	\$ 285.00
Other Contributions	\$ 20.00
Extra-Curricular Items and Activities for Prep-2	\$ 40.00*
Total	\$ 345.00

* to be advised

3-6 Contributions - 2025

Category	
Curriculum Contributions	\$ 285.00
Other Contributions	\$ 20.00
Extra-Curricular Items and Activities for Grade 3 - 6	\$ 390.00*
Total	\$ 695.00

* to be advised

SCHOOL LUNCHES

Research clearly indicates that nutrition plays a pivotal role in the quality of a young person's physical and neural development. Therefore, for optimal success with a student's learning program, we advocate for providing students with the highest quality nutrition possible. It is equally important to encourage and support students in taking responsibility for the quality of food they consume.

Specifically, we ask families to:

- Provide lunches that are nutritious, wholesome, and free of artificial chemicals, additives, or colours. These lunches should consist of fresh fruits, salads, vegetables, grains, nuts, eggs, meats, dairy, pasta, or any other healthy, fresh, whole foods.

Please note: Fridges are not available; therefore, lunches should be packed in insulated bags with ice bricks.

Certain food items have been extensively researched and are known to have adverse effects on children's health or offer little to no nutritional value. We kindly request cooperation in excluding these items from school lunch containers: lollies, sweet treats (e.g., biscuits, cakes), foods containing chocolate, sugary spreads, chips, and drinks other than water.

For those interested in further nutrition information, the link below will provide valuable insights into children's health:

<https://heas.health.vic.gov.au/schools/whole-school-approach>

<https://www.fedup.com.au/factsheets/support-factsheets/eating-for-success>

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/preventive-health/nutrition/victorian-healthy-eating-enterprise>

Nude Food

We encourage families to follow the nude food approach.

What is Nude Food? Nude Food is food without excess packaging. This reduces the amount of 'stuff' that needs to go in bins to be sent to landfill. Durable, reusable containers are a great way to bring food, as they may last from pre-school through to high school and beyond, providing long term cost saving and environmental benefits.

We encourage families to reduce the amount of material sent to landfill to benefit the environments by packing...

- snacks/food in reusable containers
- water in a reusable bottle
- reusable utensils when needed
- a reusable lunchbox.

Avoid...

- lunches packed in plastic bags, wrap, foil or baking paper
- single use plastic forks and spoons
- pre-packaged single-serve snack items.

Tips for packing Nude Food lunches

- Help children to make nutritious, waste-less lunches and let them make their own lunches. Try packing lunches the night before and storing them in the fridge overnight.
- Discuss with your child what they would like to eat and how much. Be mindful of what comes home in your child's lunchbox. If you are not sure how much they can eat at school, start small, e.g. a piece of fruit and a sandwich, and build it up if they are asking for more.
- Cut up fruit and vegetables and pack them in reusable containers so that children can eat some and save the rest for later. For example, it is hard to take some bites from big apple at break and save the rest for lunchtime. It is easier to eat a wedge or two and then reseal the container. A rubber band around a sliced apple will prevent browning.

- Buy snacks in larger bulk packs (rather than the more expensive so-called 'convenience' packs' with lots of packaging) and have your children put the same quantity into a reusable-labelled container that they bring home each day.

WATER BOTTLES IN CLASS

It is important that students remain hydrated during the school day. For this reason, drink bottles are allowed in the classroom for easy access to water. Drink bottles should only contain water and not juices or cordials. For safety reasons, glass bottles are not permitted.

SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

Our school newsletter is sent out electronically via XUNO each Monday. Alternatively, you can access the newsletter via the school website. Instructions for installation of XUNO are included in the Enrolment pack.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Birregurra's School Uniform Policy mandates that students wear a school uniform on regular school days and during excursions. Occasionally, students may organise free dress or fancy dress days, during which no uniform is required.

In an effort to ensure simplicity and affordability for our school community, we have opted for a straightforward school uniform. Our uniform primarily consists of clothing available in standard colours from various suppliers. Ideally, students should acquire at least one item of the school uniform featuring the school's logo. These items are available on either the bomber jacket, windcheater, or polo shirt. A uniform order form is included in the Enrolment Pack, allowing parents to order new uniform items each term.

Purpose

The compulsory wearing of school uniform at Birregurra Primary school aims to:

- foster a sense of community and belonging and encourages students to develop pride in their appearance
- support Birregurra Primary School's commitment to ensuring that our students feel equal and are dressed safely and appropriately for school activities.
- reduce student competition on the basis of clothing
- enhance the profile and identity of the school and its students within the wider community.

Uniform Choices

The colours of the school uniform are royal blue and white. Students can choose from the list as appropriate to the weather:

- Royal Blue polo top, long or short sleeve with logo
- Navy blue shorts- (Bike shorts only permitted on Sport's Days)
- Navy blue skorts
- Gingham dress (checked blue and white)

- Black school shoes, OR Blundstone/Rossi/Crosby pull on boots OR sneakers. Please note NO open toed shoes are permitted.
- Broad brimmed or bucket hats in school colours
- Navy blue Track pants / pants- generic no labels
- Navy Blue leggings (under skirts, dresses only)
- Bike shorts are only to be worn under dresses or on sports days
- Royal Blue jumper with logo
- Grade 6 graduation jacket

Suppliers: Orders may be placed at the office – specific dates for orders to be taken are listed in the newsletter. Some uniform items are kept in stock at the school for emergency purchases.

Implementation

1. All children are required to wear full school uniform daily.
2. Items of secondhand uniform are also available at the school office.
3. School hats and school bags are available for purchase direct from the office.
4. Contact will be made with families that are non-compliant with the uniform policy.

**** PLEASE NAME ALL ITEMS OF CLOTHING ****

Please note:

1. No thongs to be worn (unless for medical reasons).
2. Students are **not permitted** to wear decorative jewellery to school. Stud earrings and sleepers worn in the ears, and watches, are the only acceptable jewellery.
3. No tank tops, singlets and shoe-string tops, as these do not meet dress standards required in our Sun Protection Policy.

SEESAW LEARNING PORTFOLIO

Seesaw is a student driven digital portfolio. It empowers students of all ages to create, reflect, collaborate and share what they are learning at school. Teachers also share weekly updates via the SeeSaw App. Families are provided with a link to their child's folder at the beginning of each year.

SOCIAL MEDIA & THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Birregurra Primary School recognises the importance of the teacher, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning and sharing through social media applications. These applications include, but are not limited to Facebook, Blogs, Teams and other online tools through which people connect and share information.

All members of the school community are expected to use social media in a respectful and responsible manner. Social media should not be used to insult, present offensive or inappropriate content or to misrepresent Birregurra Primary School or any member of the school community.

STUDENT PICK UP ARRANGEMENTS

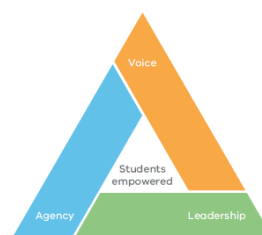
Classrooms are special spaces for students to learn. Please enter these spaces respectfully, and if you need to pick up your child early, kindly arrange this with their teacher in advance. If someone other than a parent or guardian is picking up your child, the school must have prior approval from the parent or guardian.

If you need to modify your child's usual after-school pick-up arrangements, please contact the school office before 3:00 PM to ensure that your child and their teacher can be informed. Changes may involve arranging bus bookings, specifying alternative individuals to collect your child, or notifying the school if you are running late for pick-up.

STUDENT VOICE, AGENCY AND LEADERSHIP

At Birregurra Primary School, leaders, teachers and students collaborate and plan how they will boost student voice, agency and leadership in classrooms and across all levels of schooling.

Research suggests that there are compelling reasons to amplify student voice, agency and leadership. We recognise that young people who find their own voice in supportive school environments are more likely to develop a confident voice, a capacity to act in the world, and a willingness to lead others. By empowering students, we enhance student engagement and enrich their participation in the classroom, school and community. We help students to 'own' their learning and development, and create a positive climate for learning.



When students have a strong sense of agency, starting with more commitment and a strengthened focus on their learning, a positive cycle of learning is generated. Students who are empowered to take ownership of their learning, understand and contribute to the development of learning intentions, are invested in the assessment processes and monitor their own learning goals and improvement.

As students become invested in their own learning, they gain a better understanding of what good learning is and the purpose of it. This enables them to evaluate their own work, and to more purposefully discuss progress and achievement with teachers, each of which has a significant effect size on achievement.

Additionally, empowering students to become partners in school decision-making recognises that students are knowledgeable experts in their lives and acknowledges that they can contribute to improving their schools and communities.

WEB PAGE

Our school website, <http://birregurraps.vic.edu.au>, is a great way for families to stay up to date and informed about the latest news and events happening within our school. When you browse our website, you will find information about our school and all the programs that we have to offer. Forms and newsletters are also available on our webpage.

WELLBEING PROGRAMS

Wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do. Our wellbeing programs extend to children, families, and staff members. Our Resilience, Rights, and Respectful Relationships program is a major wellbeing initiative; however, we also offer a range of other programs to support students and families.

We have a dedicated Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader who is available to support our whole school community with wellbeing needs, including referral pathways as well as a school chaplain.

School Chaplain

The chaplain's role includes the pastoral care for the members of school and wider community. Responding to issues and critical incidents as they arise, as well as facilitating proactive relationship building, small group delivery and programs to ensure improved wellbeing outcomes for young people and their communities.

The Chaplain's role is to provide the link needed between the physical and psychological wellbeing of the students, parents/caregivers and teaching staff, ensuring that a holistic approach is undertaken as it seeks to produce resilient, resourceful, competent and successful individuals. Duties include (but are not limited to):

- building relationships and being present in the school community
- implementation of preventative and proactive programs
- promoting thinking about wellbeing
- supporting classroom activities or individual students in class
- assisting on school excursions or camps if required
- accompanying child or parent to mediation and/or court appearances and to liaise with various service providers and local councils
- home visits, if essential to the child's wellbeing
- understanding and developing appropriate boundaries
- intervention and trauma support in crises and emergencies.

Chaplains deal with a wide range of issues, including:

- social relationship issues such as anger, peer relationships, loneliness and bullying
- family relationship issues
- the development of the self - sense of purpose, self-esteem, and mental health
- the involvement of students in the community
- addressing issues of social inclusion and racism.

Duties also include informal conversations or assisting with appointments or referrals for people seeking help.

Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships

Respectful Relationships supports schools to promote and model respect, positive attitudes and behaviours – and to teach our children how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence. It encompasses:

- Developing positive and pro-social values

- Developing strategies for coping and bouncing back
- Finding courage in everyday life as well as in difficult circumstances
- Optimist thinking and looking on the bright side
- Amplifying positive emotions and managing negative emotions
- Developing relationship skills
- Using humour as a coping tool
- Skills for countering bullying
- Skills and attitudes for being successful.

Respectful Relationships integrates the teaching of these important personal and social skills within all key learning areas. It uses children's literature to teach the key wellbeing and resilience concepts. It also incorporates cooperative learning strategies, circle time, educational games, music, drama, art and contemporary culture and technology. Many of the activities also feature critical and creative higher-level thinking.

The RRRR program is explicitly timetabled, taught each week in the classroom, and reinforced by linking to school values and student action groups. The program links many areas of the Victorian Curriculum.

Referral Programs - Students

We offer a range of services to students through a referral process. If children are requiring extra educational, health, social or emotional support we can access a range of in school services to support your child.

Referral Programs- Families

We provide information to families who are looking for specific services to help them with their child's or family's needs. Our Health and Wellbeing Leader can assist with the referral process.

XUNO PARENT APP

XUNO is an online platform to receive all school communications. XUNO is available via an app that can be downloaded through Google Play or the App Store. It can also be accessed through a website. Through XUNO the school sends out reminders and notifications about various school events.

We use XUNO to distribute the weekly newsletter and student reports at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. Parents and teachers can send instant messages to each other. Student's attendance appears live as soon as the roll is marked. Parents can send in absence notifications to advise that their child /children will be away from school. We ask that any absence be reported by 9.10am.