

Friday 21st November
2025
Issue 19

LINK LETTER



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From the Principal

Tony Ryan

Hi everyone and welcome to our week 7 newsletter. We have had lots of activities going on around the school across the past couple of weeks and many exciting activities to round out the year.

Grade 4 Camp:

Our grade 4 students and staff are excited by the opportunity to attend camp at the start of next week at Alexandra Resort Camp. This will be a great opportunity for our students to test themselves against a range of adventure activities and to celebrate a great year of learning with their peers and staff.

2026 Students Leaders:

Our year 5 students have been going through the process of applying for our 2026 Student Leadership positions across the past fortnight. This process involves writing an application letter and our school staff shortlist candidates for interview from this and from their knowledge of the leadership qualities of our students. In some situations, shortlisted candidates are asked to provide a video of themselves responding to some key questions.

Mr Hunt and I have started this process with the key roles of School Captains and Vice Captains and have been interviewing shortlisted candidates across this past week.

Term 4

- Grade 4 Camp
Alexandra Adventure
Resort: 24th-26th November
- Prep-2 Swimming
Tuesday 25th November
- Prep 2026 Transition
#4 Thursday
27th November
- P-2 Swimming
Friday 28th November
- Prep-2 Swimming
Tuesday 2nd December
- Prep-2 Swimming
Tuesday 8th December
- Prep-2 Swimming
Friday 5th December
- Year 7 State School Transition Day:
Tuesday 9th December & Grade 2 Bundoora Farm Excursion
- Prep 2026 Transition
#5: Wednesday 10th December
- Year 6 Graduation:
Thursday 11th December
- Curriculum Day:
Student Free Day- Monday 15th December
- Last Day of School Year:
1:00pm Assembly – 1:30pm dismissal – Friday 19th December

Term Dates 2025

Term 1: January 30 – April 4
Term 2: April 22 – July 4
Term 3: July 21 – September 19
Term 4: October 6 – December 19

We have both been super impressed with the quality of our student leaders and it makes the tasks of selecting the successful candidates very challenging. The outcome of the decisions will be released in the coming weeks. Regardless of the outcome, it is very encouraging to see the quality of student leaders that we have in our school.

Remembrance Day:

Last week on the 11th November our school captains and vice captains attended a Remembrance Day ceremony with their families and myself at the Watsonia RLS. Ellie, Daniel, Minnie and Lucy did a great job representing our school and laid a wreath on behalf of the school.

We also stopped prior to 11:00am at school where Mr Hunt and some of our student leaders led our school through our school ceremony and minute of silence to pay our respects to all our service men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice for our country.

Congratulations Maria:

At the conclusion to the Watsonia RSL Remembrance Day ceremony, there was a second ceremony held. The Watsonia RSL has a fantastic initiative each year where they provide a graduating student from each local primary school a student scholarship award. The scholarship is awarded for a student who has shown the Anzac Spirit in relation to Courage, Commitment and Mateship.

I am pleased to share that Maria Xapolytos was the 2025 recipient for this award at WHPS.

This year, Maria has demonstrated remarkable resilience and perseverance, meeting challenges with courage and determination. She shows up to school every day with a positive attitude and a strong commitment to her learning. She consistently gives her very best effort and is willing to push herself beyond her comfort zone. We are proud of the young person she is becoming and believe she deserves to be recognised for her strength, perseverance, and outstanding effort. Congratulations Maria!



Thank You!

Last Friday after school we held our Term 4 Working Bee. I want to extend a big thank you to all those families who participated in the Working Bee and participated in activities such as painting, weeding, pruning, planting plants and sweeping up leaf litter etc. It has made such a visual difference to our school and makes for a brighter environment for our students. We very much appreciate those in our community that give up their time to support school activities.

I'd also like to extend my thanks to Mrs McLean who coordinated the working bee on the afternoon and to her husband Stuart, who was legendary in manning the BBQ and cooking up a feed for our hungry workers. Many thanks to all involved!

Canteen:

Whilst I'm on the subject of volunteers, I wanted to express my thanks to those members of the community who have contacted our canteen manager Cara, to offer their time to volunteer in the canteen.

We offer our canteen as a service to our community rather than as a money-making exercise. As a result, its viability relies on the generosity of our community offering their support to volunteer to support Cara in running the canteen. Unfortunately, last week we needed to close the service on Friday due to a lack of volunteers.

We are currently considering what the service may look like in 2026 and whether changes to its days or times of operation need to be considered. We may send out a survey in the coming weeks to gather community feedback on the best way to ensure we have a viable canteen service next year.

International Men's Day:

Wednesday this week was international men's day. This was a great opportunity to acknowledge all the great men in our school community. Our office team and wider female staff team did an awesome job of celebrating and acknowledging our male staff members. I was certainly a beneficiary of their kindness and thank them for their efforts in celebrating the male members of our team.



2026 School Fees:

You will have received the 2026 school fee documentation for our school. We ask that you complete this paperwork and return to the school as soon as practicable (Red Pages). This does not need to include payments at this stage, but simply returning the documentation will allow us to prepare for the 2026 school year in establishing your family accounts for next year.

We are committed to providing a comprehensive learning program that involves many disciplines and subject areas. Our ongoing challenge is to continue to provide these experiences in a way that provides a depth and thoroughness for our students. We STRIVE to provide the most up to date resources, activities and subscriptions for your child to access the highest quality teaching and learning provision.

Christmas Raffle:

Our Community Links Team is coordinating our annual Christmas Raffle again this year. This highly valued activity on our calendar is an important fundraising opportunity for our school and is a great way to celebrate the conclusion to our school year. We are hoping to direct funds raised towards adding additional playground infrastructure for our students to enjoy.

The Community Links team are also calling out for donations towards the prize hampers. We had a great outcome from this last year with lots of donations meaning that we were able to have many amazing hamper prizes and additional winners. If you have items that you believe would be suitable to donate for a prize hamper such as gourmet food items, chocolates, wine or business vouchers etc please reach out to our Community Links team or our school office.

Raffle tickets will be able to be purchased via online methods or in person via cash at our school office. Further details to be released via the Community Links Team in the coming week. Our raffle is intended to be drawn across the last week of term and our lucky winners announced. The hampers are super useful in the lead up the holiday season. Good Luck everyone!

DET ICT Policy Change:

I mentioned a few weeks back and many in our community would also have seen in the media an announcement of a policy change by the Education Minister. This announcement related to restrictions on the use of ICT devices by students and removing personal devices involved in BYOD programs in primary schools from 2027.

The announcement came as a surprise to many in the educational community and was light on for detail in terms of how it is to be implemented. It has major ramifications to many primary schools such as our own that have 1:1 BYOD programs in place.

I have since learned that schools are allowed to do a gradual phase out of their BYOD programs over time, meaning that families that are already in our program and have already outlaid funds to purchase a device will be able to continue using them in primary school settings.

As a result of this information, we won't be introducing our year 3 students in 2026 to our 1:1 BYOD program. We will redistribute some of our existing ICT resources to provide access to learning devices within the classroom, but this won't be on a 1:1 ratio. This means that there is no need for our current grade 2 families to be purchasing an iPad in preparation for 2026.

Our Years 4,5 & 6 students will continue to have access to their personal learning devices, and we will gradually phase the program out across a few years whilst adhering to the time on device guidelines.

Sand Update:

Another recent topic in the news has been the concerns raised around asbestos contaminated sand products in public circulation. I sent a Compass post out this week with the below information.

For current information about the recall, including a list of products, visit the [ACCC website](#). At our school, we are taking the steps set out by the Department of Education to collect and dispose of the products.

At this point in time, none of the sand related products that we have at school have been identified as a product of concern. Out of an abundance of caution the school has removed all sand products from use currently until further advice is provided by the Department of Education or Government related health advice.

Current advice from national and [Victorian health authorities](#) is that there is a low risk to human health from these products.

If you have the product at home, however, the advice from the health authorities is that you should stop using it and follow the safety advice published here: [Safe disposal and health information for consumers with recalled sand products | ACCC Product](#)

Social Media Law Changes:

From 10 December 2025, age-restricted social media platforms will need to take reasonable steps to prevent Australians under the age of 16 from creating or continuing to use an account. We know this shift may bring up challenges in schools and classrooms – from students feeling frustrated or disconnected, to parents seeking advice from teachers and school staff.

ReachOut have created a guide designed to help parents understand how the change may impact their teen's emotions and wellbeing, and ways they can support them to navigate the transition. Whilst the guide is designed for teens and families of teens, we know that the same issues will be impacting many pre-teen families including those in our community. I will be sending a post via compass with the ReachOut guide attached, but thought it was worth including the information here also.

Reports:

Our staff are in the middle of a very busy time when they are writing our end of year reports. We hope that our parents/carers find these reports to be an insightful measure of the learning progress of their child across the second semester. The school reports will be released via Compass during the second last week of term.

A reminder to our year 6 parents and any other families exiting the school this year to download all student reports (including prior years) off Compass by the end of this year. Once the new year rolls around your access to the school Compass page will end and so will the opportunity to download previous reports.

Results of Screens:

You may remember that we have previously publicised the free hearing and sight screens conducted by the Diamond Valley Lions Club for 3-6 year olds.
The school has received feedback that as a result of the screens this year
39 children were tested for hearing loss
40 children were tested for sight issues

Of the 39 tested for hearing loss -

6 were referred to their GP for follow up, &
4 were recommended for immediate diagnostic audiology

Of the 40 tested for sight issues -

20 were considered at-risk and referred on.

This is a very worthwhile community initiative that we are happy to publicise.

Parking:

A reminder to the community that the local council has previously advised that the areas adjacent to the rear staff carpark driveway (near the library) are not designated car parking spaces. I understand that some members of the community have previously received parking fines when parking in this area. In addition to this, the driveway entry into the staff carpark must be clear at all times to allow our staff access to enter and exit.

End of Year Dates:

- Tues 9th December Year 7 Transition Day (for public school settings)
- Wed 10th December 2026 Prep Transition Session #5
- Thurs 11th December Step Up Morning (meeting 2026 teacher and class)
- Thurs 11th December Year 6 Graduation
- Mon 15th December Curriculum Day (student free day)
- Fri 19th December Last Day of School – Final assembly @ 1:00 for a 1:30pm dismissal.

2026 School Term Dates:

Term 1:

- Thursday 29th January Years 1-6 Students return
- Friday 30th Preps start half day
- Preps Wednesday's off during February (apart from assessment day)
- Thurs 2nd April term 1 end

Term 2:

- Mon 20th April term start
- Fri 26th June term end

Term 3:

- Mon 13th July term start
- Fri 18th Sep term end

Term 4:

- Mon 5th Oct term start
- Fri 18th Dec year end

Have a great weekend everyone,

Tony

FREE COFFEE

KELLY CLUB

GRAB A FREE COFFEE AND MEET THE KELLY CLUB TEAM!

27TH NOVEMBER 8:30AM

It's a great chance to ask any questions about our programs and hear how we create a safe, connected and playful space for your kids!

INTEGRITY CONNECTION PLAYFULNESS

From the Assistant Principal

Stuart Hunt

As we move deeper into Term 4, I want to extend my sincere thanks to our whole school community for the ongoing positivity, enthusiasm and support shown across these busy final weeks. It truly is a privilege to witness the way our students, staff and families contribute to the warm and vibrant culture of our school, including the recent Working Bees to help our grounds flourish.



Last Thursday 13th November, we conducted our scheduled off-site evacuation drill and I am incredibly proud to reiterate how successful it was. The drill ran smoothly, efficiently and—most importantly—safely. Our students displayed exemplary behaviour from beginning to end. They listened carefully, followed instructions with maturity and supported one another throughout the process. It was particularly impressive to see the calm and respectful manner in which they patiently waited to cross Henry Street and organise themselves at Central Park. Drills like these are an essential part of maintaining a safe environment, and the students' attitudes demonstrated that they understand the importance of being prepared. A heartfelt thank you also goes to staff and parents for their cooperation and encouragement before, during and after the drill.

In addition to our safety preparations, this week has also been a significant one for student leadership. I have had the pleasure of reading through the School Captain and Vice Captain applications submitted by our Year 5 students. The quality of writing, sincerity, and passion within these letters has been outstanding. After careful consideration, Mr Ryan and I shortlisted a smaller group of students and finalised our interview process this week. This next step is both exciting and challenging; the calibre of applicants is exceptionally high, making the selection of just two School Captains and two Vice-Captains a genuinely difficult task. Regardless of the final outcome, every student who applied should feel incredibly proud of their courage, effort and commitment to representing their peers.



Looking ahead, we are preparing for two highly anticipated events next week. Our Grade 4 Camp is just around the corner, and the sense of excitement among students (and staff!) is growing by the day. Camp is always a highlight of the school year, providing rich opportunities for developing independence, teamwork and resilience. We know our Grade 4 students are going to have a memorable and rewarding experience.

Next week also marks our next Prep Transition session for students beginning school in 2026. These sessions continue to be a joyful and important part of welcoming our newest learners and helping them feel comfortable and confident as they prepare for the big step into primary school. It has been wonderful to meet so many enthusiastic future Preps and their families and we look forward to another positive session ahead.

As the Term 4 rollercoaster continues, thank you again for your ongoing support. Our school is thriving because of the collective commitment of our students, families and staff and I am grateful each day to be part of this community.

Warm regards,
Stuart

Student of The Week

Week 6

CONGRATULATIONS



Corbin, Dusk, Colin, Bailey, Audrey, Isla, Ryan, Artie, Levi, Tom, Rae, Harvey, Charlotte, Fletcher, Riya, Emma, Tilly, Matilda, Finn.

Week 7

CONGRATULATIONS



Arlo, Josephine, Kit, Anouk, Hendrix, Hamish, Rylan, Lilah, Lachlan, Paide, Ella, Will, Izzy, Sapphire, Luca, Praise, Lachlan, Evelyn, Kayla, Ernest, Mila, Mccaela, Lachlan.

Congratulations!

Wellbeing
Awards



Zoe &
Emma



**\$245 for 3 days! 30%
Offer ends November 23rd!**

PROGRAM INCLUDES

- 01** 9-3pm each day
- 02** Basketball, Netball, Soccer, Cricket, Hockey and Pickleball on offer
- 03** Suitable for all ages and skill levels
- 04** Guest appearances at selected programs



It was overall very positive and the kids made great connections with coaching staff and other participants



THREE DAY SCHOOL HOLIDAY SPORTS CAMPS!

LOCATIONS

- Camberwell Grammar School, Canterbury
- Trinity Grammar, Kew
- Hays Paddock, Kew East
- Stonnington Sports Centre, Malvern East
- M.L.C, Kew
- Carey Bulleen Sports Complex, Bulleen
- Camberwell Hockey Club, Canterbury
- Doncaster Secondary College, Doncaster
- Boroondara Sports Complex, Balwyn North
- Eildon Park Cricket Club, Rowville
- Sir Robert Menzies Reserve, Malvern
- Balwyn Park, Balwyn

SEE WEBSITE FOR DATES

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