



Newmerella Primary School

Learning Excellence Caring Honesty



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Principal Report – Sarah Walker

Wuman Njinde Parents, Students and the School Community,

Respectful, safe, engaged: shared expectations to support student behaviour. Together, we create safe schools where everyone belongs, learns, and thrives. When schools, families and students work together, we achieve the best outcomes. These partnerships are essential to creating school environments that support all students to belong, learn and thrive. As a parent and carer, you play a vital role in helping your child to understand and meet shared behaviour expectations.

How Students Demonstrate Respectful, Safe and Engaged Behaviours:

At school, all students are expected to be respectful, safe, and engaged. These behaviours help make schools a place where everyone can succeed.

Students meet these behaviour expectations by being **respectful, safe and engaged**.

Respectful

Following staff instructions and school rules.
Caring for school property and others' belongings.
Using respectful language.

Safe

Keeping themselves and others safe from harm.

Speaking up or seeking help from an adult if they or someone else is being treated unfairly.

Only bringing safe and necessary items to school.

Engaged

Going to school every day, being on time, and ready to learn.

Taking part, doing their best, and asking for help when they need.

Knowing and following the school's policies, including the mobile phone policy.

How parents and carers can help

By modelling and encouraging positive behaviour, you help your child build the skills and habits they need to be successful at school. When families and schools work together, students can achieve their best.

Parents and carers can help support their child's behaviour to be **respectful, safe and engaged**.

Respectful

Knowing the school's rules and supporting them at home.
Modelling respectful behaviour in how you speak to and about school staff, families, and others both in person and online.

Making use of the school's processes to raise and resolve concerns early.

Safe

Working together with staff if your child is having problems at school to understand and resolve the issue.

Ensuring your child knows it is okay to ask for help from a trusted adult at school.

Ensuring your child stays safe online by talking with them and addressing concerns early.

Engaged

Helping your child to attend school every day – everyday counts.

Communicating with school staff and working together to support your child's learning and wellbeing.

Talking with your child about their day and how they are feeling and encouraging their learning by noticing their effort and progress.

Welcome

Welcome to Newmerella PS 'Valley of Plenty', we acknowledge the ones that come before us and thank the people that teach and share the stories of the past. We acknowledge the Gunai Kurnai elders past, present and emerging and extend our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders students and families.

Important Dates - February

Monday 23rd

Littles Learning 9:00 to 11:00am.

Tuesday 3rd to 17th

Friends For Fun 2:00 to 3:00pm.

MARC Van and Newsletter distributed.

Wednesday 18th and 25th

Prep testing.

Friday 13th and 27th

Assembly.

Attendance:

We know that some students and their families are struggling with school attendance or navigating school refusal. Here are some resources that can help:

[Attendance and missing school](#)

[Parenting strategies](#)

How schools support students to meet behaviour expectations

By teaching and reinforcing positive behaviour, schools ensure positive, safe and fair learning environments with a focus on learning and wellbeing.

Schools support families and students by being **respectful, safe** and **engaged**.

Respectful

Teaching and demonstrating school rules and positive behaviour expectations to students.

Explicitly teaching, modelling and acknowledging expected respectful behaviour.

Engaging collaboratively and positively with all students, parents and carers.

Safe

Having clear policies and procedures to prevent and respond to bullying and keep students safe.

Offering additional supports to students proactively and supporting students to speak up and seek help.

Proactively identifying and addressing problems to maintain a physically, socially and culturally safe school environment.

Engaged

Delivering evidence-based, inclusive education that meets the needs of all students.

Empowering students to have a say in decisions that affect their learning and school life.

Building strong, trusting relationships to ensure all students feel seen, heard and valued.

The Department of Education provides resources and support for schools to build positive student behaviour and foster positive relationships between schools, students and families.

Where parents and carers can go for help

If you are concerned about your child's wellbeing, behaviour or safety you can:

Talk to your child's teacher or identified contact person as the first step and follow the school's process for communicating concerns.

Ask the school for support or a referral – they can connect you with wellbeing staff or specialist services.

Contact the Department of Education's [regional office](#) if you need further assistance.

The following resources are also available:

[Raising Children Network](#) – provides advice for parents and carers of [school-aged](#), [pre-teens](#) and [teens](#).

[eSafety Commissioner](#) – advice for parents and carers to help keep children safe online.

[Report Racism hotline](#) – find out how to report racism or religious discrimination in schools.

[Bully Stoppers](#) – advice for parents and carers about bullying.

School Council March Elections:

School Council Nominations are now open, and we invite parents to nominate themselves or others for the positions. There are **3 parent positions open** for a 2-year term (2026 and 2027). We always need new parents keen to join, so please don't hesitate to nominate or get in touch if you're interested. Forms are available at the general office. Please note that from 2026, all School Council parent members will be required to have a current Working with Children's Check to be eligible for nomination. The school will help you with a Working with Children's Check if you don't have one.

Junior School Council:

The school leadership team who are Daniel, Ashlea and Will G will be responsible for supporting student voice and agency within the school. They had their first opportunity to do this last Thursday and will meet with me this week to discuss our 'Hopes and Dreams' list for the school and hopefully we can make some of these requests come true.

Incursions:

Last week, 2 incursions took place on the one day and this was Wheel Talk and Hockey. Both clinics were provided to the school free of charge and we are certainly grateful that there was no cost to the school/ parents. In hockey the students learnt basic ball and stick skills and completed several drills. They were given information to attend a hockey clinic/training in Orbost. In Wheel Talk students learnt about inclusion, being grateful for opportunities they are given and fairness.

Administration Building:

Due to a leaking roof and gutter problems on the administration building that has been ongoing for quite a few years with many temporary fixes taking place, a Make Safe report was completed at the end of last year and approx. \$29,000 was spent on a new roof, box guttering and sealing of the skylights. More work is still needed to be done and we are hopeful that a structural engineer will visit the school to advise us on the floor and works to be completed on this.

Cadbury Fundraiser:

Please support our latest fundraiser. The fundraising boxes will be available for pick up on Thursday. We ask parents to personally come in and pick up their box/es and that way they can either discuss payment arrangements with office staff and/or pay in person.

Parent Voluntary Contributions:

So how do your contributions help the school?

At the most basic level, **Key Aspects of Government Funding:**

Student Resource Package (SRP): The main funding mechanism for Victorian government schools, composed of student-based funding (core learning and equity) and school-based funding (infrastructure and programs).

Types of Funding:

Student-based: Based on enrolment numbers and specific student needs, including equity funding for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with disabilities, or needing extra support.

School-based: Covers infrastructure, maintenance, and school-specific programs.

Targeted Initiatives: Specific programs with defined lifespans.

Usage: Covers core teaching and learning, leadership, staff salaries (payroll tax and superannuation), professional development, and relief teaching.

Allocation Methodology: Per-student rates are used, ensuring that schools with more students—or more students with specific needs—receive more funding.

Improvements such as well-maintained playgrounds for play, furniture upgrades and resources to support diverse learners, student technology and online subscriptions, extra assistance in the classrooms with staffing, transport for curricular and extra-curricular activities etc are funded through **locally raised funds** — which come from parent contributions and fundraising.

While education is free, government funding alone does not cover many of the extras that make a real difference to students' learning and comfort. Parent contributions and community fundraising help us provide these important enhancements for our children.

Our current reality like many government schools is despite the significant time and effort our staff invest in preparing detailed expressions of interest for additional funding as it relates to grants for building upgrades, shade sail, furniture, infrastructure etc, we are sometimes unsuccessful due to the high volume of applications. This ongoing pattern leaves us with little choice but to rely on locally raised funds — including parent contributions and fundraising — to provide the resources and improvements our students deserve. I encourage you to complain to your local MP to encourage the Victorian government to meet their obligations to fully fund schools now and not by 2034 as they have agreed. Our students deserve to be seen and heard now and not in 8 years' time. Staff at Newmerella Primary School will continue to put your child first and will continue to apply for grants, free curriculum incursions and excursions, communicating concerns to DET and number crunching to ensure our students don't miss out.

School Review:

As we begin the final year of our current School Strategic Plan, we're proud of the strong foundations we've built and the progress we've made together over the past 3 years I have been at this school. This year is an exciting one, as we see all our hard work come together in ways that make a real difference for every child. We're also looking ahead to our School Review in Term 4 with confidence and optimism and we remain committed to working in partnership with you to ensure every child continues to feel supported, challenged, and inspired to learn and grow at our school.

Extra Curriculum Day Approved:

An extra curricular day was approved by school council for Thursday 26th March. This was requested by all schools in the far east Gippsland network due to our schools not being able to come together because of the local fires at the start of the year and extremely hot weather conditions. Thank you for your understanding. On this day we will be delivering a series of workshops based on connectedness and belonging.

Stop Work Action:

A 24-hour Australian Education Union Stop Work Day of Action will be held on Tuesday 24th March. We will keep you informed closer to the date as to how this impacts your child. Please be mindful and respectful that staff who do choose to stop work on this day of action **do not** get paid and they do so due to the Victorian government not meeting their obligations to fully fund schools, support work conditions etc.

Swimming Carnival:

Congratulations to 6 of our students in the senior class who participated at local level for the swimming carnival. We had Will G and Elly A go through to the next level which is district. We wish them all the best for their events this Thursday. A huge thank you to all the parents that helped out on Thursday at the pool.

Classroom Teachers and Communication:

Please remember that Compass is our main point of contact regarding communication and your child's classroom teacher regarding social, emotional and behaviour concerns. Whilst staff use Compass to chronicle entries, this is for reference purposes and to see if there are any patterns of behaviour. We do not call parents on minor incidences that relate to the yard and/or in class as these are addressed by staff and consequences and/or supports are put in place as soon as possible. Any major causes of concern please be assured you will be contacted.

Until next time,

Sarah



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Student of the Week

Awards

The winners for the fortnight were: Olivia, Louis, Aurelia and Elsie.

Top effort kids!



Positive Behaviour Raffle

Students who are displaying positive behaviours that are aligned to our school values which are LEARNING, HONESTY, EXCELLENCE AND CARING in the classroom and/or in the yard can receive a raffle ticket. This fortnight's winners were Jarrah and Nevaeh. Well done kids, keep up the great work.



Specialist Subjects

Awards

Students that display a positive attitude to their specialist subjects for the fortnight are Willow S, Olivia, Lily G, William, Wyatt and Elsie.



Reading Raffle Awards

To be eligible for the weekly reading raffle, students must read 5 out of 7 nights. The winners for the fortnight were: Ashlea, William W and Willow. Great reading everyone!



Curriculum Days

Tuesday 27th Jan, Wednesday 28th Jan, Thursday March 26th

Monday 24th Aug and Monday 2nd Nov.

School Holidays

Term 1: Friday 3rd April to Sunday 19th April.

Term 2: Sat 27th June to Sunday 12th July.

Term 3: Sat 19th Sept to Sunday 4th Oct.

Term 4: Sat 19th Dec.

Fortnight School Values

Caring and Learning We encourage parents to discuss and reinforce their children what the actions for the weekly values might look like.



School Council 2025

President: Jo Austin

Treasurer: Kalina Mekken

Secretary: Kelly Morrison

Principal: Sarah Walker

Staff Representatives: Nicole Mathers and Janet Munn

Community Members: Elaine Hofen and Pam Beveridge

Parent representatives: Jason Griebelow and Lisa MacFarlane.

Every Day Counts

Please contact the school if your child is going to be away.

Bus Travellers

Please notify the school if your child is being picked up so we can mark them off the roll. Parents are reminded that changes to bus travel arrangements require 24 hours notice and approval by Orbost Community College.



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Compass

Just a reminder that Compass is our first point of call with regards to communication. If you are unable to access this, please speak to office admin.

CSEF (Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund)

The Department of Education administers the CSEF to help eligible families with the costs of camps, sporting activities, excursions and incursions. Payments are made directly to the school of an eligible family or for that student's siblings at the same school. If you hold a valid concession card or are a foster carer, you may be eligible for CSEF. To apply for this, please complete an application form which is available at the general office and/or in your information packages which have been given to families who are currently on our system. For further information about CSEF, please visit <https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>

School Council Elections

The school has parent vacancies available for a 2 year term of office. We would love to have more parent representation. We meet 2 times per term and it is your opportunity to help shape the future of the school. When a school lacks a formal school council, the principal, in consultation with the region, must establish an interim council to set key directions, budgets, and policies. Without one, the school risks reduced community input, lower engagement in strategic planning, and potential compliance issues regarding legal requirements.

Grade 6 shirts

Our grade 6 students received their shirts and certificates at assembly on Friday.

They all help to design their shirts and have done a fantastic job!





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QR Code

This is our QR code that goes directly to our website. It will be on the front page of the newsletters from now on.



School Documentation

Thankyou everyone for returning all the required forms so promptly.

Please see link below for Safer internet usage for your children

[Resources for educators | eSafety Commissioner](#)

This busy fortnight at N.P.S.



TERM 1 CALENDAR

February 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2 Littles Learning 9-11am	3 Marc Van Newsletter Friends for fun 2-3pm	4 Swimming training 1:30-2:30pm for selected students No Preps-Prep testing	5	6 Swimming training 1:30-2:30pm for selected students Bushfire drill	7	8
9 Smile Squad School Council 5:30pm	10 Smile Squad Hockey Road Show Friends for fun 2-3pm Wheel Talk 1-5pm	11 Smile Squad No Preps-Prep testing	12 Smile Squad St Jo NPS, Marlo Swimming Carnival 10am – 2pm	13 Smile Squad Assembly	14	15
16	17 Marc Van Newsletter Friends for fun 2-3pm	18 No Preps-Prep testing	19 District Swimming Orbost Pool	20 P/1 Library visit	21	22
23	24 Friends for fun 2-3pm	25 District Swimming Orbost Pool back up day No Preps -Prep testing	26	27 Assembly P/1 Library visit	28	

March/April 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2 Division Swimming Sale	3 Marc Van Newsletter Friends for fun 2-3pm	4 Division Swimming back up day	5	6 P/1 Library visit	7	8
9 Labour Day Holiday	10 Friends for fun 2-3pm	11 Naplan	12 Naplan	13 Naplan Assembly P/1 library Visit	14	15
16 Naplan	17 Marc Van Newsletter Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6 Friends for fun 2-3pm	18 Naplan Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	19 Naplan Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	20 Naplan Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	21	22
23 Naplan	24 Naplan	25 Naplan Parent teacher conferences	26 Curriculum Day – No students Network day OCC	27 Naplan Assembly	28	29
30	31 Marc Van Newsletter	1	2 Last day of term 1	3 Good Friday School Holidays		