

# Newmerella Primary School

*Learning Excellence Caring Honesty*



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## Principal Report – Sarah Walker

Wuman Njinde Parents, Students and the School Community,  
It has been a busy couple of weeks at school, with a whole host of activities being enjoyed by all students.

**SOVEREIGN HILL CAMP:** School camps and their role within the curriculum have recently been the subject of considerable media attention. Increasingly, many schools are choosing to cancel camps due to the significant costs involved, including staff time-in-lieu requirements and rising travel expenses associated with fuel prices. We are fortunate that the Grade 4/5/6 Class attended Sovereign Hill camp on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> to Friday 20<sup>th</sup> March and we have put measures in place to support our school camps. We stayed at Sovereign Hill Lodge and watched a gold pour, confectionary and candle dipping demonstration, swam at the Ballarat Aquatic Centre, played at some parks around Ballarat in the mornings, explored the Red Hill Mine Tour, watched the AURA Sound and Light Show, and students immersed themselves in some education sessions about the Eureka Story and Labyrinth of Gold. We came back tired, but excited to share what we did. Thank you to Ms Munn for driving the bus and assisting with supervision and school council for paying for the transport

**TEACHER CONFERENCES:** This year we changed the timing of our teacher conferences and instead of having these over 2 afternoons and early evenings, we scheduled it into an early start and late afternoon finish. Thank you for taking the time to schedule a meeting with your child's classroom teacher. Classroom teachers will follow up with a phone call home with families who didn't attend in person.

**INDUSTRIAL ACTION:** As you will be aware, the Australian Education Union called on its members to take strike action on Tuesday 24 March 2026 and staff at Newmerella Primary School went out on strike without pay as a result. This is because of the breakdown in negotiations over the new Victorian Government Schools Agreement (VGSA). The VSGA is an industrial agreement that sets the pay, working conditions, and rules for staff working in Victorian government schools. Presently, it is being negotiated between the government and staff of government schools via the Australian Principals Federation and the Australian Education Union.

## 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 - April /May

### Assembly

24th April at 3pm

8th, 22nd May at 3pm

### School Council 5:30pm

11th May

### Marc Van

31st March

28th, April

12th, 26th May

### 2nd April

Last Day of Term 1-2:15 finish

### Monday April 20th

### First day back for term 2



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The previous VSGA expired at the end of 2025. Thank you for supporting our profession and for your understanding and standing up for your child's education. These actions form part of broader negotiations aimed at improving conditions for staff and ultimately supporting better outcomes for students across the system.

**SCHOOL HATS AND UNIFORM:** As the weather is becoming colder, we are noticing children coming to school in windcheaters and tops that are not school uniform. Children will be given a clean spare top to wear and/or be asked to put on their school top if it is in their locker and/or school bag. We will be reminding children on Thursday to take their school hat home and get it washed in readiness for Term 4.

**BUNNINGS INCURSION:** The incursion from Kellie from Bairnsdale Bunnings was a winner and all children had the opportunity to make an animal keyring to which attached to their bag zips to take home. Bunnings is a great supporter of our school, and we look forward to working with Kellie again in the future.

**NOMINATE YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER:** Click on this link to nominate now!

**[2026 Teaching Awards Applications Open Now!](#)** Each year, the Schools Plus Teaching Awards shine a light on exceptional teachers whose commitment, creativity and leadership are transforming learning outcomes for young people especially in Australia's most disadvantaged communities. These prestigious awards recognise educators who go beyond the curriculum to remove barriers to learning, strengthen student wellbeing and create environments where every child can thrive. Applications are open until Friday 8 May 2026.

**FAR EAST NETWORK CURRICULUM DAY:** Last Thursday saw Newmerella PS staff attend OCC as part of our Big Day Out which focused on Connectedness and Belonging. All staff attended 2 workshops on the day and these included: VTLM – Victorian Teaching Learning Model 2.0 supported application, VTLM 2.0 planning, VTLM 2.0 planning disability inclusion, VTLM 2.0 enabling learning – enable student self-regulation and self-efficacy, VTLM 2.0 enabling learning KESO cultural responsiveness, PCMS encouraging expected classroom behaviours, SWPBS classroom behaviours expectations and rules, attendance – all students feel welcome, included and engaged at school, strong relationships with parents and carers supported by communication and engagement, respectful relationships, autism strategy, job skills and pathways, senior pathways program and what I want my teacher's and adults to know about me.

**TERM 2 STUDENT TEACHER RMIT:** The school looks forward to welcoming Shannon who will be taking up a 3 week teacher placement in Ms Munn's room mid-May as part of her second year teaching placement.

**MEASLES: Heading:** Measles cases are rising in Victoria and around the world. Returned travellers make up most cases, but local spread has also been detected.

Vaccination is the most safe and effective way to protect yourself and others against measles. People need 2 doses of a measles-containing vaccine to be fully protected.

You can check your measles vaccination records: · on your Medicare online account through MyGov or by contacting the Australian Immunisation Register on 1800 653 809

- on your personal health records, such as your childhood immunisation records
- by speaking to your GP or immunisation provider.

About measles Measles is a viral infection. It spreads easily from airborne droplets, such as from coughing or sneezing, and nose and throat secretions. Symptoms may include:

- fever · feeling tired or unwell · cough or runny nose
- sore and red eyes (conjunctivitis) · diarrhoea – especially in infants.

This is usually followed by a red, blotchy, non-itchy rash that often starts on the face before spreading down the body.

Measles can cause serious illness and be life-threatening. People who are not fully immunised or have not had a previous measles infection are at increased risk.

Pregnant women, children aged under 5 years and those with weakened immune systems are at increased risk of severe illness and complications

If your child develops measles symptoms, you should:

- keep your child home from school and seek medical care and testing
- call the health service and wear a face mask when travelling to and attending the health service
- let our school know if your child has measles, or is being tested for measles
- keep your child at home until well and advised by a health professional.

Free measles vaccines

Anyone who does not have 2 doses of measles vaccine, or is unsure, can get a measles vaccine.

Free vaccines are available for:

- infants aged 12 months to 18 months
- children and teenagers aged under 20 years
- adult refugees and humanitarian entrants.

Free vaccines are also available for anyone with or without a Medicare card if they are:

- born during or after 1966 who have not received 2 doses or are unsure, including people born overseas
- infants from 6 months and before 11 months of age before overseas travel.

Vaccination is widely available at your GP, local pharmacist, local council or Aboriginal Health Service. Call ahead to see if you are eligible for a free vaccine.

### **ENROLMENT (PREP) 2027:**

Starting primary school is an exciting time for children, parents and carers. In Victoria, the first year of primary school is called Foundation or Prep.

To start Foundation (Prep) in 2027, your child will need to turn 5 years old by 30 April 2027. School is compulsory for children who have turned 6 years old.

Victorian government primary schools follow the same timeline to enrol children starting Foundation (Prep) in 2027. The timeline does not apply to government specialist schools. For information about enrolling in a government specialist school, you should read [Enrolling in school](#).

Steps to enrol your child for the 2027 school year

If your child is starting Foundation (Prep) in 2027, you will be able to apply for enrolment at a Victorian government primary school from the start of Term 2, 2026 (Monday 20 April 2026).

What you need to do:

Visit the [Find my School](#) website to find your designated neighbourhood school (your local school) for 2027 and other nearby government schools.

1. Contact a government primary school to book an optional school tour and learn more about the school and the enrolment application process.
2. Download the Foundation (Prep) Enrolment Information Pack for Parents and Carers (released in Week 1, Term 2). This pack includes the application form.
3. The school may also provide you with a copy of the application form to complete or advise if they are using online enrolment.
4. Submit your enrolment application to the school by Friday 31 July 2026.

You will be notified of the outcome of your application between Monday 3 August and Friday 14 August 2026. The letter from the school will include the next steps. If you receive an enrolment offer, you should respond to the offer by Friday 28 August 2026.

Enrolment applications submitted after 31 July 2026 will be processed by the school as they are received. Your child has a right to enrol at their local school. Your child's local school is determined by their permanent residential address. The [Enrolling in school](#) page can help you to confirm your child's address for enrolment.

If you are applying to a school that is not your child's local school, you should read about [school zones](#) and how they work. You should also read about how applications are prioritised using the Department of Education's Placement Policy found on the [Enrolling in school](#) page.

Enrolment information pack and application form

The Foundation (Prep) Enrolment Information Pack for Parents and Carers provides detailed information about enrolling your child into Foundation (Prep) for the 2027 school year.

[Foundation \(Prep\) Enrolment Information Pack for Parents and Carers \(DOCX, 1.2MB\)](#)

This pack includes a copy of the enrolment timeline and Frequently Asked Questions. It also includes an application form. Before applying, make sure you contact the school to learn about their enrolment application process. The school will tell you whether to complete this application form or provide you with a link if they are using online enrolment ([VicStudents\(opens in a new window\)](#)).

Appeals

If you were unsuccessful in your application to a primary school, you can appeal. To appeal an enrolment decision, you should lodge a written appeal with the school using the Appeal Form. For further information and to access the Appeal Form, refer to the pack below, also available on the [Enrolling in school\(opens in a new window\)](#):

[Appeals information pack for parents and carers \(DOCX, 77KB\)](#)

[Appeals information pack for parents and carers \(PDF, 268KB\)](#)

### **YEAR 6-7 PLACEMENT INFORMATION PACK FOR PARENTS AND CARERS:**

[Year 6 to 7 Placement Information Pack for Parents and Carers](#), which will be provided by your child's primary school by Wednesday 22 April 2026. The pack also includes the Year 7 application form.

Use the [Find my School](#) website to locate your local secondary school or preferred government school, and read about [School zones](#) and [Enrolling in school](#).

- Complete the application form and return it to your child's primary school by Friday 8 May 2026.
- Before applying, make sure you contact the school to learn about their enrolment application process. The school will tell you whether to complete this application form or provide you with a link if they are using online enrolment <https://students.educationapps.vic.gov.au/s/>
- Year 7 placement is decided by secondary schools using the Department of Education's Placement Policy. However, all communication about your child's placement must be with the Year 6 Coordinator / Classroom teacher at your child's primary school until the placement is confirmed.
- You will receive notification of your child's Year 7 placement offer on Wednesday 24 June 2026.

All government secondary schools will host a Year 7 Orientation Day (for Year 6 students) on Tuesday 8 December 2026.

VOUCHER APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE NOW:

## GET ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHER PROGRAM



Apply for up to \$200 to support your child  
in sport and active recreation activities.

Visit [getactive.vic.gov.au](http://getactive.vic.gov.au)



**SCHOOL TOURS:** If you are interested in a tour, please don't hesitate to call or email to arrange a time that suits you—we are always happy to accommodate families where we can. Information packs are also available from the office, providing further insight into the programs, opportunities, and community that make our school such a great place to learn and grow.

**EVERY MINUTE AND EVERYDAY COUNTS:** One of the most important foundations for success is regular school attendance. Every day at school is an opportunity for learning, growth, and connection. Missing even small amounts of school can quickly add up. For example, missing just one day per fortnight can result in your child missing four full weeks of learning over the course of the year. This can have a significant impact on both academic progress and social development.

We understand that there can be challenges from time to time. If your child is feeling reluctant to attend school, please reach out to us—we are here to support you and work together to ensure your child feels happy, confident, and ready to learn.

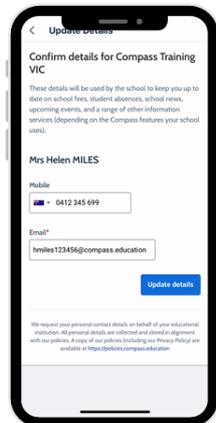
### COMPASS SUPPORT:

#### Update your details

Ensure your school has your most updated contact details.

1. Click on the 'More' menu
2. Click on 'Update My Details'

Once you have updated and confirmed your contact details, click on 'Update details'. Your school will then review the updates.



On behalf of all the staff at Newmerella Primary School, have an enjoyable Easter long weekend and school holidays. We look forward to seeing your child refreshed and ready to learn on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April.

Until next time

Sarah



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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. Please speak to Di, Wendy or myself if you would like to nominate for a 2-year appointment. School Council is responsible for the policy development and implementation in the school, the financial accountability of the school, the facilities planning, acting as the official "voice" of the school and delivering the long-term aspirations for our community.

Please consider.

**School Council AGM the following office bearers were elected.**

**President: Jo Austin**

**Secretary/Treasurer: Lisa MacFarlane**

**Minute Taker: Nicole Mathers**

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING DATES 2026:**

**11.05.26**

**15.06.26**

**20.07.26**

**10.08.26**

**12.10.26**





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## Student of the Week Awards

The winners for the fortnight were:  
Charlee, Maci and Hugo.  
Excellent work everyone.



## 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.

Kobe and Hudson won the award for helping to clean up the classroom without being asked. Well done boys!



## Specialist Subjects Awards

Students that display a positive attitude to their specialist subjects for the fortnight were:  
Hudson Beveridge for excellent effort in sport.



## 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: Troy and William W.

Keep up the great reading everyone!



## Curriculum Days

Monday 24<sup>th</sup> Aug and Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> Nov.

## School Holidays

Term 1: Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> April to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April.

Term 2: Sat 27<sup>th</sup> June to Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July.

Term 3: Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Sept to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> Oct.

Term 4: Sat 19<sup>th</sup> Dec.

## Fortnight School Values

Honesty and Excellence

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



## School Council

### 2025

President: Jo Austin

Treasurer/Secretary: Lisa MacFarlane

Principal: Sarah Walker

Staff Representatives: Nicole Mathers and Janet Munn

Community Members: Elaine Hofen and Pam Beveridge

Parent Representatives: Jason Griebenow, Megan Sage, Kalina Mekken 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 Orbest Community College.

# TERM 1 CALENDER

## 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 School Council AGM	17 Marc Van Newsletter Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6 Friends for fun 2-3pm	18 Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	19 Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	20 Sovereign Hill camp grade 4/5/6	21	22
23	24 Stop Work Union Action School Closure	25 Parent teacher conferences 1:30-4:30	26 Curriculum Day. OCC– No students	27 Assembly	28	29
30	31 Marc Van Newsletter	1	2 Hat Parade 9:15 <b>Last day of Term 1 2:15 Finish</b>	3 Good Friday School Holidays		