

Principal Report

Dear parents and carers,

Welcome Back to School!

A warm welcome back to all our students and families as we begin a new and exciting school year! It's wonderful to see everyone returning, and a very special welcome to all the new families joining our school community for the first time. We are so thrilled to have you with us. We hope you quickly feel at home and become a part of our vibrant school.

This year, one of our school-wide goals is to improve student attendance. We believe that every-day counts, and regular attendance is crucial for student success. We encourage all members of our school community to champion good attendance habits. Parents and carers, please remember to contact the school office to explain any absences. The easiest way to do this is via the Compass platform. Your help in this matter is greatly appreciated.

We look forward to a fantastic year of learning and growth together!

Hats

Just a reminder that our navy blue school hat must be worn outside from the end of August to the end of April. Children who are not wearing a hat will be directed to the shaded/quiet area of the school. Please ensure the children's hat has their name clearly marked to enable it to be returned should they lose it. Please remind children that we do not have hats to loan out and they must bring their own hat every day.

Personal Belongings

Please ensure that ALL personal belongings (including hats, jumpers, lunch boxes and water bottles) are labelled with your child's full name. All items returned to the school office with names are returned to students.

Poowong OSHC (Out of School Hours Care)

Poowong OSHC is up and running for the year. This year we welcome Hayley Maher to the PCS Team as the Poowong OSHC Coordinator. Hayley comes with a wealth of experience and passion. As the Poowong OSHC is being established, we are offering **FREE** OSHC for all students at PCS for Term 1. If you would like to enrol your child in OSHC, please use the link the following link – <https://poowongoshc.fullybookedccms.com.au/>

Student Medical Conditions and Medication

With the start of our new term, just a reminder to advise the School Office if your child has had any changes to their medical condition(s) or if they have a new condition for which the school has not been previously advised.

If your student has a known medical condition and their medication has changed, please advise the office to ensure that we have the correct permissions in place.

Please ensure any medication provided is in-date and supplied with the correct paperwork (please discuss this with the office if you are unsure).

Getting to know your child” Interviews

“Getting to know your child” interviews will be held on Monday February 17th.

The purpose of these interviews is. Parents and guardians are encouraged to attend to:

- Meet their child’s teacher to begin an effective home/school partnership.
- Provide information to teachers regarding their child’s strengths, talents, issues or concerns.

Information shared by parents to teachers will assist us to plan for and work as effectively as possible with you and your child throughout the year. Interviews will be 10 minutes in length. Booking information is done via the Compass app. If you have any trouble with this, please see your child’s teacher or the office.

Annual privacy reminder for our school community

Our school collects and uses student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the [Schools’ Privacy Policy](#) and the [Schools’ Privacy Collection Notice](#).

We ask parents to also review the guidance we provide on how we use [Google Workspace for Education](#) safely at the school and what parents can do to further protect their child’s information. If after reviewing the guidance, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child using Google Workspace for Education, please contact the school.

For more information about privacy, refer to: [Schools’ Privacy Policy — information for parents](#).

NAPLAN 2025

This year NAPLAN is being held in term 1 from March 12th through to March 24th for all year 3, 5, 7 and 9 students. The teachers already have begun work on assisting students to become prepared for the assessments, not just so they can perform at their best, but also to reduce any anxiety it may cause. If you’re worried about NAPLAN for your child, or if you have any questions please speak with your child’s teacher or to the Principal.

Vic Emergency Fire Danger Information

Poowong Consolidated School is registered on the Department of Education’s Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR). We are a level 4 school which suggests that we are only at heightened risk when the district (West & South Gippsland) has been declared with the warning of Catastrophic Fire Danger. This is the highest level of warning and would generally follow several very high temperature days and strong northerly wind. In the case of this declaration being made, Poowong Consolidated School will not operate for the declared day. There is further information regarding this situation on a full page of this newsletter.

Emergency Management Procedures

All schools are required to have an emergency management plan which includes a variety of processes for handling an emergency. These vary greatly depending on the type of emergency and can include evacuation offsite, evacuation onsite, lockdown and a shelter-in-place. We have a practice emergency drill each term to analyse our processes and ensure they are as efficient as they can be. Students have the process explained to them and are supported by the staff throughout the process.

Please note that in the event of the school having to enact one of the emergency management procedures, our number one priority is ensuring that all students are safe as per our duty of care. If you are concerned at any time that your child has been affected by one of these procedures, please let their classroom teacher know so that we can put some additional supports in place.

Ambulance Costs

Please note that in the unfortunate instance that the school has to call an ambulance to attend your child, the cost is met by the family. With any serious injury we endeavour to contact the parent, guardian or emergency contact. However, there are times when this is not possible and/or the nature of the injury calls for immediate assistance. The safety of your child will always be our first priority.

The cost of ambulance transport can be daunting. Cost for children on excursions would be even higher and the cost of an air ambulance, should that be necessary, would be enormous. Ambulance cover can be taken out for around \$100.00 per family. More details can be obtained by phoning 1800 648 484. Some health funds cover ambulance as well. Clearly, we hope that there will not be a need to call an ambulance, however, it is important for people to be aware of the huge cost associated with this service and the fact that it will need to be paid by the family concerned.

Parent Morning Tea

Parents and carers are warmly invited to join us for our termly morning tea after drop-off at 9:00am on Friday 14 February in the Staff Room. Come along and meet some fellow parents from other classes and learn about opportunities to become involved in school life. Looking forward to seeing you there.

Voluntary Contribution

Thank you to those families who have paid their voluntary family contribution. This supports the wonderful programs we run at PCS and ensures our students have access to the resources they need for learning. If you have queries relating to the voluntary contributions, please come and see the wonderful ladies in the office.

Regards

Michael Smethurst

Principal

michael.smethurst@education.vic.gov.au

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

FEBRUARY

2025

11th February

School Photos

12th February

House Swimming

13th February

Lunch Orders Return

14th February

Parent Morning Tea

19th February

District Swimming

24th February

Student Free Day

25th February

Reading Information Night

(Prep to Grade 2)

25th February

Harvest Festival

26th February

Grade 5 Mediation

27th February

Grade 6 Mediation

28th February

Division Swimming

MARCH

2025

10th March

Labour Day Public Holiday

12th—24th March

Grade 3 & 5 Naplan

27th March

House Athletics

APRIL

2025

4th April

Last Day of Term 1
(2.30pm Finish)

21st April

Easter Monday
Public Holiday

22nd April

Term 2 Starts

25th April

ANZAC Day Public Holiday

30th April—2nd May

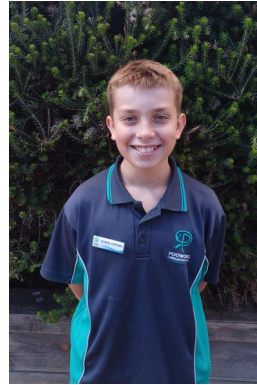
Grade 3 –6 Camp
The Summit



Meet our 2025 Grade 6 Leaders



School Captain:
Jack McIntosh



School Captain:
Hudson Warren



**Red House
Captain:**
Hugo Dyer



**Yellow House
Captain:**
Memphis Finch



**Green House
Captain:**
Madison
Braithwaite



**Blue House
Captain:**
Kealey Hansch



**Environmental
Captain:**
Isabella Kerr



**Student Voice
Captain:**
Tess Mackin

Lunch Orders Every Thursday

Lunch Order Menu

★ Potato Cake	\$1.30
★ Fried Dim Sim	\$1.30
★ Steamed Dim Sim	\$1.30
★ Chicken Nuggets	\$1.20
★ Party Pie	\$1.50
★ Sausage Roll	\$3.50
★ Battered Hot Dog	\$4.00
★ Hot Dog	\$5.50
★ Chicken strip, Cheese & salad wrap	\$6.00
★ Chicken Strip Salad	\$5.50
★ Ham & cheese sandwich	\$5.00
★ Ham, Cheese & Tomato Sandwich	\$5.50
★ Ham, Cheese & Salad Sandwich	\$6.00

Drinks -

★ Primas - Apple & Blackcurrent or Tropical	\$2.50
★ Nippys - Chocolate or Strawberry	\$3.00

Sweet Treats -

★ Moro Bar Slice	\$2.50
★ Muffins - Blueberry, Apple & Cinnamon or Chocolate Mudcake	\$3.50
★ Tomato Sauce	40cents

Please write order on paper bag with childs Name and Class,

Include correct cash for your childs order inside paper bag.

Orders to be at school by 9:30am

Lunch order day Thursdays

CSEF Information



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

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. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's background and their outcomes.

CAMPS, SPORTS & EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

School camps provide children with inspiring experiences in the great outdoors. Excursions encourage a deeper understanding of how the world works while sports teach teamwork, discipline and leadership. All are a part of a healthy curriculum.

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school 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.

The annual CSEF amount per student is:

- \$154 for primary school students
- \$256 for secondary school students

HOW TO APPLY

New applicants should contact the school office to obtain a CSEF application form or download from the website below.

If you applied for CSEF at your child's school last year, you do not need to complete an application form this year unless there has been a change in your family circumstances.

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

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

Check with the school office if you are unsure

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>



Vic Emergency Fire Danger Information



School Preparations for the Bushfire Season

The Department of Education runs an annual fire risk assessment of schools and early childhood services. Some schools are allocated a category of risk (categories 0 to 4) and are published on the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR).

All schools and early childhood services listed on the BARR and Category 4 list will also close when a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast in their fire weather district.

When the Bureau of Meteorology provides public fire danger rating forecasts or fire weather warnings, they use fire weather district areas. In Victoria, there are 9 fire weather districts, which are based on Local Government Area boundaries. Our school is in the **West and South Gippsland Fire Weather District**.



Our school has been identified as being at risk of bushfire or grassfire and is a Category 4 school. Our school will close on a day forecasted as Catastrophic fire danger rating in West and South Gippsland fire district.

Closure of the school due to a forecast Catastrophic day will be confirmed on the day prior and we will provide you with advice before the end of the school day. Any information regarding potential or confirmed Catastrophic fire danger days will be communicated to you on the Compass App and our school Facebook page.

Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, even if the weather forecast changes. This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child. It is also important to be aware that:

- No one will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Catastrophic day.
- Out-of-school-hours care will NOT operate on these days.
- All school bus services will be cancelled.

Families are encouraged to action their Bushfire Survival Plan on Catastrophic fire danger rating days. On such days, children should never be left at home alone or in the care of older children. For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the Country Fire Authority (CFA) advises that when Catastrophic days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Catastrophic day.

What can families and the school community do to help us prepare?

- Ensure we have your current contact details, including your mobile phone numbers.
- Keep in touch with us by downloading and login into the Compass App for Poowong Consolidated School.
- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is closed due to a Catastrophic fire danger.
- Action your family's bushfire survival plan if your own triggers are met. Our school community may be spread out across many areas and some families may be at higher risk than others. Your family's safety is critical, so please let us know if you are actioning your bushfire survival plan and if your children will be absent on these days.