Casterton Secondary College

School Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2026

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

During term 3 our senior students have been working hard to finalise tasks leading to the successful completion of their secondary schooling, whilst staff continued to create the conditions that support every Casterton Secondary College student to become a powerful learner.

The school's **Student Attitudes to School** data is above Similar, Network and State government schools in every domain and factor. This is an outstanding result that demonstrates our students are engaged with their learning, put in the effort to achieve their goals, are supported and feel safe. A summary of the results is attached.

2026 NAPLAN

During the term we received our 2026 NAPLAN results for Year 7 and 9 students. Given the tests are held in March and the school has only had year 7 students for a couple of months we use the year 7 NAPLAN results as baseline data to inform future learning.

In 2023, the NAPLAN assessment framework changed its grading system. Individual student scores are now allocated a proficiency scale, which includes bands such as "Exceeding," "Strong," "Developing," and "Needs Additional Support," which emphasises students' skills and capabilities at different levels of achievement, focusing on their progression in addition to their performance.

Our 2026-year 9 NAPLAN data is above Similar, Network and State government Victorian schools in every domain, results we can be proud of. A high percentage of students achieved a strong or exceeding proficiency level in Reading (85%), Numeracy (75%), Writing (95%), Spelling (85%) and Grammar and punctuation (85%).

We provide identified students with individual and small group support in numeracy and literacy. Every year 7-10 Mathematics and English class is allocated an education support person.

Online Gaming – School TV (on the school's website)

With the holidays fast approaching it is timely to remind students and parents/carers about the impact online gaming has on young children and teenagers.

Online gaming has both positive and negative effects where moderate play can improve problem-solving skills, hand-eye coordination, and social connection.

However, excessive or compulsive gaming often leads to sleep deprivation, lower grades, reduced physical activity, and increased risks of anxiety or behavioural issues.

Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg writes: ***"Young people can be particularly vulnerable when exposed to excessive gaming. An unhealthy sedentary lifestyle, exposure to harmful content, cyberbullying, development of gaming disorders, or engagement in online gambling."***

School TV (the link is on the school's website) covers online gaming and provides parents/carers with strategies to manage the ensuing challenges of too much "gaming" time, especially in the early hours of the morning.

There are 23 interviews with leading specialists in this area, including Dr Aaron Drummond who is a cognitive cyber psychologist and his research is concerned with issues such as the psychological effects of digital media use on aggression, mental health, academic performance, and cognition.

There are also a number of additional resources and links to organisations such as the eSafety Commissioner website.

It’s never been more challenging for parents/carers to raise happy, healthy and resilient children. SchoolTV is a mental health resource platform that provides an extensive range of wellbeing resources for parents/carers.
With experts like Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg, it provides bite-sized videos, fact sheets, and practical strategies to help navigate youth challenges.

Thank you to all parents/carers for supporting our school. By working together, we can make sure your children have the opportunity to learn, grow, and navigate a successful career pathway.
Casterton Secondary College staff are committed to supporting your children to achieve successful outcomes.

Enjoy a safe and relaxing holiday.

Warm regards
Meridith

2026 Attitudes to School Survey Comparison

percentage (%) positive endorsement

Framework Domain	Factor	CSC	Similar	Network	State
Effective teaching practice for cognitive engagement	Differentiated learning challenge	**76**	63	57	59
	Effective classroom behaviour	**74**	58	57	79
	Effective teaching time	**79**	64	59	64
	Stimulated learning	**71**	56	51	56
Learner characteristics and disposition	Sense of confidence	**73**	56	54	60
	Attitudes to attendance	**78**	69	69	76
	Perseverance	**73**	57	56	61
	Motivation and interest	**66**	54	52	59
	Self-regulation and goal setting	**74**	54	52	61
School safety	Advocate at school	**83**	69	64	65
	Managing bullying	**78**	56	53	54
	Respect for diversity	**64**	47	43	48
Social engagement	Sense of connectedness	**57**	50	45	53
	Student voice and agency	**62**	48	43	47
	School stage transitions (Y10-12)	**83**	61	57	61
	School stage transitions (Y7 and new)	**80**	69	64	69
Teacher student relations	High expectations for success	**90**	75	70	73
	Effort	**80**	64	60	67
	Teacher concern	**56**	45	39	40

CITIZENSHIP AWARDS: TERM 3

John Webb

The following students were nominated for Citizenship Awards this term.

Ylana Grigg: Assistance at Grade 4 Partnership Day
Skye Kurzman: Assistance at Grade 4 Partnership Day
Charlotte Rhook: Assistance at Grade 4 Partnership Day
Bailey Carlin: Assistance at Grade 4 Partnership Day, Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Darcy Gorman: Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Riley Gorman: Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Alby Lane: Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Fraser Richardson: Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Harry Simson: Umpiring Primary Schools Lightning Premierships
Darcy Brown: Umpiring Glenelg District Basketball
Renee Gorman: Umpiring Glenelg District Basketball

Progressive House Points
Glenelg: 2310.33
Wannon: 2130.67

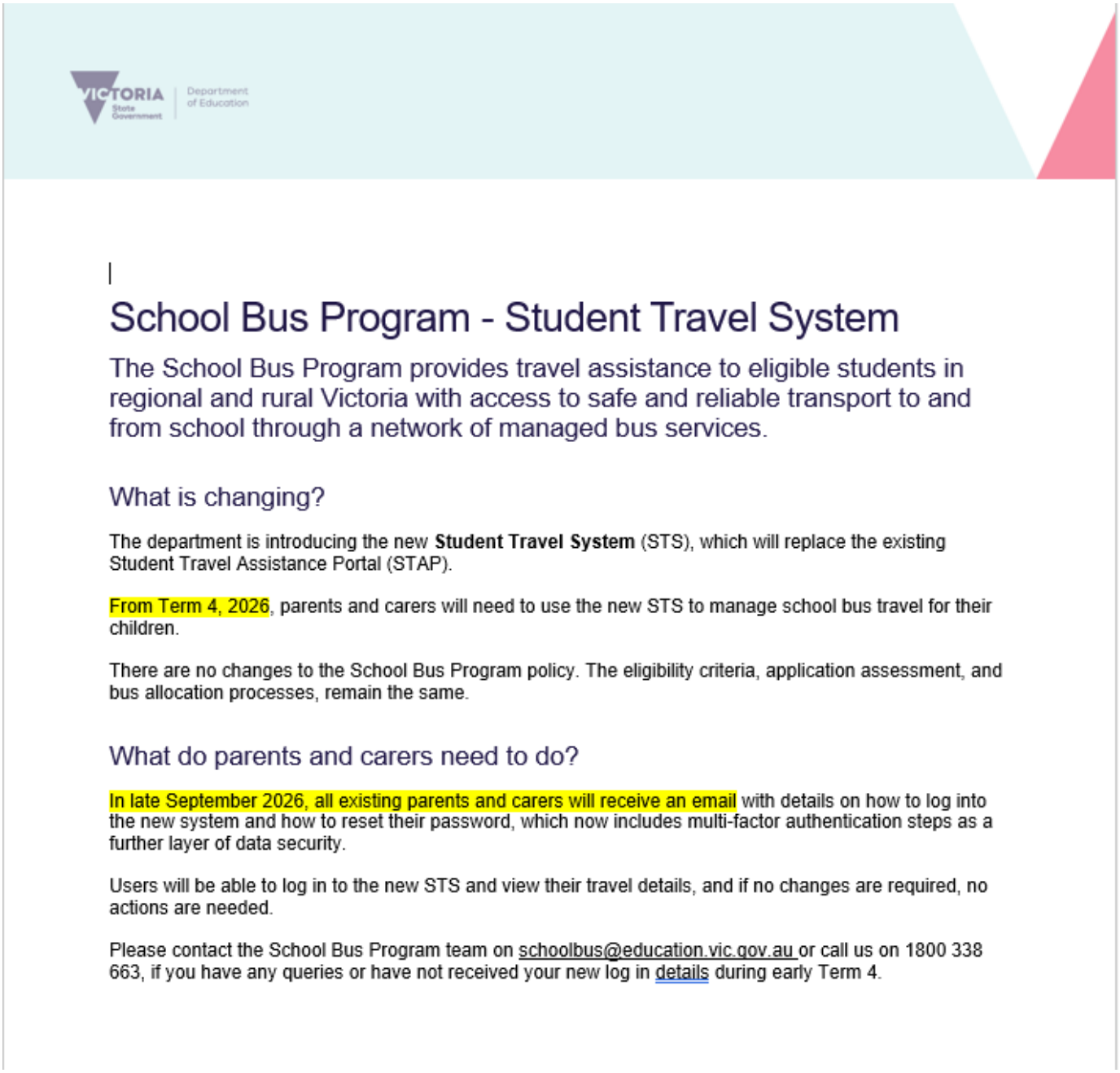
R U OK?

The LIVE4LIFEgroup, supplied some lovely, brightly iced cupcakes to push the message amongst the students at school

"R U OK"

SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL INFORMATION

Could all parents/ carers of bus travellers read through this information and please read the email that will be sent from Student Travel System.



VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

School Bus Program - Student Travel System

The School Bus Program provides travel assistance to eligible students in regional and rural Victoria with access to safe and reliable transport to and from school through a network of managed bus services.

What is changing?

The department is introducing the new **Student Travel System** (STS), which will replace the existing Student Travel Assistance Portal (STAP).

From Term 4, 2026, parents and carers will need to use the new STS to manage school bus travel for their children.

There are no changes to the School Bus Program policy. The eligibility criteria, application assessment, and bus allocation processes, remain the same.

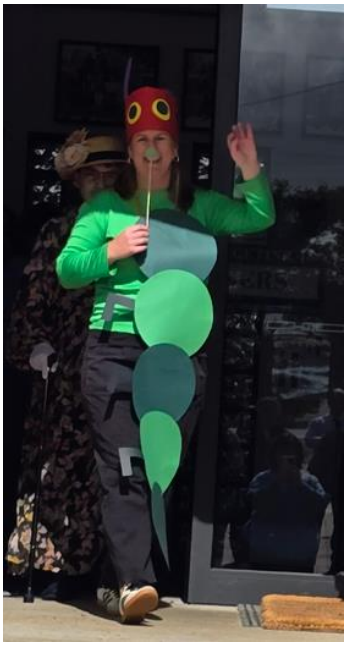
What do parents and carers need to do?

In late September 2026, all existing parents and carers will receive an email with details on how to log into the new system and how to reset their password, which now includes multi-factor authentication steps as a further layer of data security.

Users will be able to log in to the new STS and view their travel details, and if no changes are required, no actions are needed.

Please contact the School Bus Program team on schoolbus@education.vic.gov.au or call us on 1800 338 663, if you have any queries or have not received your new log in details during early Term 4.

CHARACTERS FROM BOOK WEEK



CSC FOOTY TIPPING RESULTS

John Webb

Now that the AFL home and away season is finally completed, the Casterton Secondary *College Footy Tipping Competition With A Difference* also comes to a close.

The competition generates a lot of interest in the community, and we would like to thank each of the 180 entrants for supporting the competition and our school.

Kirby Vise with 149 winners was our winner finishing one clear of Laura McCallum (Veteran Fletch) on 148 with Bryan Ferguson, Stephen Leek, Mark Widdicombe (Squid) and James Wombwell with 147 winners, sharing 3rd place.

Half the total pool is distributed to the top tipsters and the remainder of the pool, less expenses, goes to the College. This is used to pay for school bags for our incoming 2027 Year 7 students.

Kirby will receive $630, Laura receives $180, and Bryan, Stephen, Mark and James will each receive $22.50

We would also like to thank John Donegan who spends many hours entering all the selections, and Ann Hirst who delivers the results around town each week.

NOORAT SHOOT

Ann Hirst

L-R: Renee Gorman, Caitlyn Gorman, Riley Gorman, Ayden Nolte, Myles Black, Darcy Gorman, Harry Simson Darcy Brown.

Harry Simson

Caitlyn Gorman

Ayden Nolte

It was an early start for our Shooting Squad as they headed off to Noorat in the dawn to compete against students from Geelong and surrounding areas. With gear packed, nerves ready and plenty of determination, our students represented the school with pride. Thank you to Parents Mark Nolte & Dougal Simson for being a continuous support to our students, the courier for the guns and sharing endless tips on competition shooting. Even though we didn't have success this time, every competition gives our students opportunity to improve. Thank you to Mr Zippel for safely chauffeuring the bus full of students to the competition and home again. In all it was an enjoyable excursion.

Riley Gorman

Darcy Brown

Darcy Gorman

Renee Gorman

Myles Black

SPRING TIME, The School farm & year 7s

SENIOR GIRLS' NETBALL- HAMILTON

L-R: *Emma Grigg, Marlee Robbins, Adele Murphy, Amelia Luers, Kirby Vise, Ella McKinnon, Ylana Grigg, Makayla Rees, Rachel Forbes, Brydie Carlin, Renee Gorman, Lauren Cleary*

Our Senior Girls Netball team headed off to Hamilton for a full day of competition against schools from across the area. The first win of the day was discovering that the weather wasn't quite as bad as we had first anticipated! We were fortunate to have the support of a badged umpire, staff member Lauren Cleary, and a keen parent, Emma Grigg, who stepped up to coach the team. This allowed Assistant Principal Jo McKenzie to take on the many other important roles of scoring, first aid and team management — a great example of teamwork both on and off the court! The competition was strong, with some very talented teams taking to the court. Our girls worked hard, held their own and enjoyed some well-earned success throughout the day. More importantly, they embraced the experience, supported one another and enjoyed representing our school. It was a fantastic day of competition, teamwork and plenty of fun, with the girls returning home tired but happy after a great day on the netball court.

Ruby James excels at the Interschool Equestrian Dressage

Congratulations to Ruby James on an outstanding achievement at the **Interschool Champions in Intermediate Preliminary Dressage recently at Warrnambool, hosted by the Moyne Equestrian Club**. Ruby competed in both events for the Years 7 to 9, and **winning both events, earning Champion Overall** for her age group.

What a fantastic result! Ruby's dedication, skill and hard work have certainly paid off. We congratulate Ruby on this wonderful achievement and wish her continued success in the saddle, we are very proud of Ruby

EXCELLENT RESULTS AT GD SHOOTING in Hamilton

Ann Hirst

Congratulations to Ayden Nolte and Harry Simson, who proudly represented our school at the next stage of the interschool shooting competition.

Both students put in an outstanding performance, with **Ayden taking out the high gun with 21 out of 24 and winning a three way shoot off** and **Harry shot 20 out of 24 and won his two way shoot off to secure second place**. Their excellent results are a fantastic achievement and reflect their skill, concentration and dedication to the sport.

We are very proud of both Ayden and Harry on a fantastic effort and for representing our school so well.

Ayden Nolte & Harry Simson

GD SHOOTING COMPETITORS

GRADE 4 PARTNERSHIP DAY

Carina Barton

The grade four partnership day was held on Friday the 21st of August. A big thank you must go to the grade four students for their enthusiasm and behaviour, it was a pleasure to have them at our college. The students were involved in lots of different activities during the day including science, woodwork, humanities, maths, a farm tour, and physical education.

Thanks to all staff who ran lessons and Mrs Rogers, Charlotte, Ylana, Skye, and Bailey for their help throughout the day.

Yr 11 & 12 FOOD STUDIES-*Old fashioned Cheese Cake*

The year 11 & 12 students stepped back in time and recreated an Old Fashioned Cheesecake recipe without the cheese. It is a great opportunity to connect food history with cooking, I think they should be happy with their results.

Year 9 FOOD STUDIES-Jam Swirl Marble cake

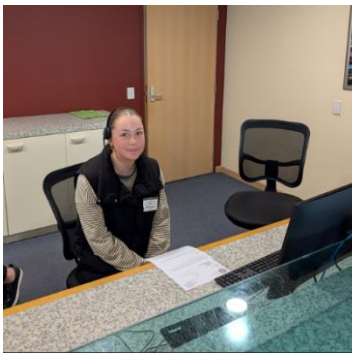
Our Year 9 Food Studies students got creative in the kitchen, whipping up delicious Jam Swirl Marble Cakes**.** Students practised their baking skills while creating beautiful swirls of colour throughout the cake, making each one unique. It was a fun and hands-on lesson, with the added bonus of enjoying the delicious results!

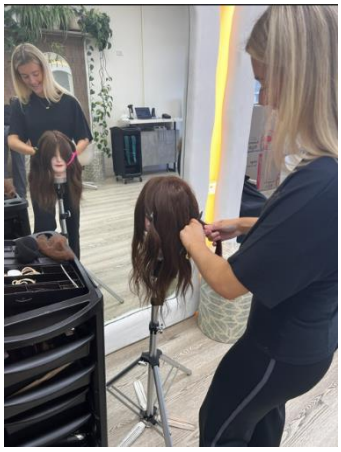
Year 10 FOOD STUDIES-*Mini Meringue Tarts*

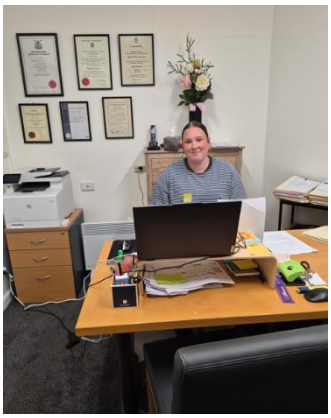
The year 10 cohort put their skills to the test and got busy making mini-Lemon Meringue tarts, despite the tight time frame, all students produced some desirable tarts to take home to share with family and friends.

Year 10 WORK EXPERIENCE

Delma Fidler







Left to Right

Ayden, Ylana, Timmy, Marlee

Natasha, Adele, Ethan

Zoe, Caleb, Chloe

The year ten students participated in another very successful work experience block during the week of the 3rd-7th of August. Our school is one of the very few schools in the region that offer their year ten students the opportunity to be involved in a second week of work experience. This additional week allows the students the chance to participate in a very different occupation and helps them to gain valuable skills and knowledge in the world of work. We would like to thank our wonderful community who supports our student requests. As a school we are very grateful to those employers and their staff for heavily investing in tomorrow's workforce.

AGRICULTURE, Lamb marking & Year 8s

There's nothing quite like getting your hands dirty and learning on the job!

Our Agriculture students have been busy on the school farm with lamb marking. This hands-on experience gives students the opportunity to develop practical skills while learning about the care and management of sheep and animal care. It's a fantastic opportunity to learn by doing and gaining valuable agricultural experience along the way.

HEALTH & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: Year 11

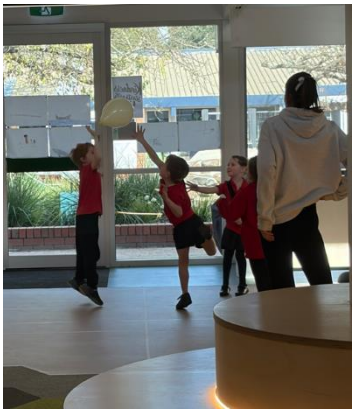
Claire Endacott

In Week 7 the Year 11 Health and Human Development students visited the Foundation students at Casterton Primary School. The purpose of our visit was to do observations of the children's fine and gross motor skill development, as the students are studying developmental growth in early childhood. The observations will be used to write up a report on how children learn.

The students had to choose a book to read to the children and compose questions to ask them as to prediction and understanding of themes and morals. The students also had to create two activities for the students to undertake using first their fine motor skills (colouring in, cutting with scissors and using tools to pick things up) and then their gross motor skills (balancing, jumping, keeping a balloon in the air).

We were very impressed with the activities designed by Makayla, Brooke and Kirby, and the children were extremely engaged throughout the session. Well done, girls!

Thank you to Gill, Kim, Scarlett and Molly for allowing us to visit and for helping us to set up and run the session. Thank you also Mrs Hirst for being our bus driver.



Mixed Media Art- Year 10

Year 10 have produced some very effective art using mixed media this term. The results are a fantastic collection of unique artworks that showcase the students' developing skills and creativity.

NEW ARRIVALS ON THE FARM

After some vet care the day prior, this ewe had minimal trouble producing twins first up the next morning. As you can see the sheep was fitted with a harness to support a prolapsed uterus, enabling the sheep to safely carry and birth the lambs.

PARTY READY PROGRAM

Our students recently took part in the **Party Ready Program**, learning some important skills for staying safe when heading out to parties and social events.

The session covered practical tips around making smart choices, looking after your mates and knowing what to do if someone has had too much to drink. Students also discussed when it's time to get help and how to respond if a situation doesn't go to plan.

The message was simple: have fun, make good choices and look out for each other! It was a great opportunity for students to gain the confidence and knowledge to help keep themselves and their friends safe.

Year 11 First Aid Course

Our year 11 students spent a day being taught the basics of first aid, the practical training providing the students with the confidence to respond to a range of first aid situations and the skills to potentially assist others when needed. A fantastic opportunity for our students to learn skills for life and another skill to add to their resume's.

FRESH FRUIT FOR SCHOOLS: COURTESY OF Portland Aluminium

Newsletter article: Schools in Category 3 on the Bushfire At-Risk Register and the Category 4 list.

School preparations for the bushfire season

Each year, to prepare for bushfires and grassfires, schools and early childhood services complete a range of activities.

The Department of Education runs an annual fire risk assessment of schools and early childhood services. They 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 South West fire weather district.

As part of preparing our school for the fire season, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan and our School Bushfire Site Readiness Checklist. Both these documents are on our website.

What does this mean for our school?

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 the **South West fire district.**

What is the department's policy?

The department's Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy requires all schools and early childhood services on the BARR and the Category 4 list to close when a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast in their fire weather district. All school bus routes which travel in or through a district with Catastrophic fire danger must also be cancelled.

When will our school be closed due to Catastrophic fire danger?

Our school will **close** on a day forecasted as **Catastrophic fire danger rating** in the **South West 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 by a XUNO

message, phone calls to parents / carers, notices given to students to take home and will also be displayed on the screen on our front lawn.

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.
- All bus routes that travel through the Catastrophic area will be cancelled.
- School camps will be cancelled if a Catastrophic fire danger rating day is forecast for fire weather district in which the camp is located, or if the travel involves passing through areas that have Catastrophic fire danger.

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 reading our newsletters, using XUNO messages, checking our website, the screen on our front lawn and by talking to the Principal, Assistant Principals or Sub School Leaders about our Emergency Management Plan.
- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements in the event that our school is undertaking learning from home and/or closed due to elevated fire danger or closed due to a Catastrophic fire danger. Further information can be found on the CFA's website.
- 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.
- If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family's bushfire survival plan.

You can find more information on emergencies, warnings and preparedness actions here:

- VicEmergency app – that can be downloaded on your android and iOS mobile devices
- VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226)
- Website https://emergency.vic.gov.au
- Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/vicemergency)
- Twitter (https://twitter.com/vicemergency)
- ABC local radio, Sky News and other emergency broadcasters

COMMUNITY NEWS