



Castlemaine

Primary School 0119

**PARENT  
INFORMATION  
BOOK**

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# Calendar for Year 2022

January						
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 PUBLIC HOLIDAYS & SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

 CURRICULUM DAYS (STUDENT FREE DAYS)  
4 days p.a. Two additional curriculum days will be announced in the newsletter.

 PREP REST DAYS DURING FEBRUARY

## STUDENT FREE DAYS (Curriculum Days)

The Department provides schools with 4 student free days per year for schools to use for administration, planning and professional development activities. **Students are not required at school on these days.** Parents should make arrangements for the care of children on these days. These days will be provided in advance to parents via the school newsletter.

## WELCOME

On behalf of the teachers of Castlemaine Primary School we welcome you and your child to our school community. This booklet is intended to give you an overview of the operations of the school and hopefully answer the more common questions you may have.

Starting school can be both an exciting and anxious time for parents and children, so it is important that home and school maintain close contact. Our teachers work hard to make classrooms an engaging and safe place for all students, and make contact regularly via the Sentral App to keep you informed of your child's progress. Our school programs aim to cater for the many differences in children – academic, social, emotional and physical – and to challenge them to do their best.

If you don't find the information you are seeking in these pages, please contact myself or one of the other members of our school staff via the general office. You can make an appointment to come in for a chat, send an email, or phone.

We look forward to a long and successful association with your family.

*Peter McConnell*  
Principal

## CONTACTING CASTLEMAINE PRIMARY SCHOOL

### CONTACT DETAILS

Address: Corner Mostyn and Urquhart Streets, Castlemaine. Victoria 3450.  
Telephone: 5472 1452  
Email Address: [castlemaine.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:castlemaine.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)  
Website: [castlemaineps.vic.edu.au](http://castlemaineps.vic.edu.au)

### 2021 STAFF

<b>PRINCIPAL</b>	Peter McConnell	<b>LEADING TEACHER</b>	Kate Ward
<b>BUSINESS MANAGER</b>	Joanne Martin	<b>CLASS TEACHERS</b>	Daniel O'Halloran Kristie Conn Megan Butler Rachel Harvey Demy Pye Joshua Ball Juliet Jeffreys Katrina Victor-Gordon Brianna Brown Amaya Osborn- Macpherson
<b>EDUCATION SUPPORT</b>	Jan Hull Kathleen Kuster		
<b>SPECIALIST TEACHERS</b>	Thais Sansom Desiree Osborne Katie Kilgour Nola Juniper Erin Cook		

All school staff can be contacted via the school email address or by phoning the office. The office is open from 8:30 am to 4 pm daily. Please leave a detailed message if our office staff are unable to take your call.

## SCHOOL BELL TIMES AND ATTENDANCE

8.35 am	Yard duty commences
8.45 am	<b>1<sup>st</sup> learning block</b> Children should be in class and ready to learn at 8.50am. Parents should ensure their child is at school @ 5-10minutes before the 8.50am bell.
10.45 am	<b>1<sup>st</sup> recess</b> Includes supervised eating time in class or on decking.
11.30 am	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> learning block</b>
1.30 pm	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Recess</b> Includes supervised eating time in class or on decking.
2.20 pm	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> learning block</b>
3.20 pm	<b>Students dismissed</b> <b>Yard duty commences</b>
3.35 pm	<b>Yard duty ceases</b> Children not collected by this time will be brought to the office. Parents will be responsible for any costs incurred.

**Supervision times are between 8.35am and 3.35pm.** No supervision is available outside these times. If parents require additional supervision of their children, the YMCA operates an after school care program. (See 'Out of School Hours Care').

### VARIATIONS TO REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

**End of term dismissal** – On the last day of each term, students are dismissed earlier than the usual dismissal time – usually **2.30pm** unless otherwise notified. Please see the newsletter and Sentral for further details.

**End of school year dismissal time** – The last day of the school year will have an earlier dismissal time. This can be as early as 1.15pm. The dismissal time at Castlemaine PS will be determined by the district school bus timetable on that day. Parents will be notified of the dismissal time through the newsletter and Sentral school app.

**CODE RED DAYS** – Our school is listed on the Bushfire at Risk Register (BARR). On Code Red days, the school will close. **Parents will be notified, in this case however warning may be short. Please be vigilant on days of extreme weather and monitor the CFA website and Sentral school app. All parents should develop Code Red day plans which include appropriate care for your children in the event of Code Red school closures.** Please see the attached Code Red day information at the end of this document.

### FULL DAY ABSENSE

When a student will be absent, or has been absent for one or more entire days, the parent/guardian should record this on Sentral. Specific information about Sentral and parent login details for Sentral will be provided to each family. If the parent/guardian is having any difficulties using Sentral, they can:

1. Notify school via Sentral Student Attendance OR
2. Send a note from home – signed and dated by the parent/guardian OR
3. Telephone the school office
4. Email the school office

### LATE ARRIVALS

When a student arrives after the 9.50am bell, they need to be accompanied by a parent/guardian (16 years or older) to the office first, where the student is signed in.

### EARLY DEPARTURES

When a student needs to leave the school before the final bell for the day, they must be signed out by a parent/guardian (16 years or older). The parent/guardian must go to the office first to sign the student out. If someone other than the parent or guardian is collecting a student, appropriate documentation must be completed through the office.

### DROP OFF AND PICK UP

Students should be onsite no later than 8:40 am and are released from school at 3.20pm each day. Parents collecting their child from school must do so between 3.20pm – 3.35pm. Children can become distressed when parents are not present at collection time, so please contact the office if you are going to be late or if there is an unforeseen change to the pickup/ drop off routine. Any student on school grounds after 3.35pm must be supervised by a parent/guardian.

### TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Parking facilities around the school are limited, and traffic congestion does occur during peak drop off and pick up times. Increased pedestrian and vehicle traffic at these times makes for a dangerous combination and parents are strongly advised to *never* place their own convenience over the safety of themselves or others.

We encourage you to consider the following strategies to minimise traffic issues around the school:

- Walk or ride to school where possible
- Seek parking a little further from the school and walk to the school
- Always use school crossings where available
- Observe and obey all road traffic laws and parking signs in the area
- Do not attempt U-turns in either Mostyn or Urquhart
- Do not park in resident's driveways
- Do not park in school buses parking zones

School staff have no authority to direct traffic movement on public roads. Parents and staff are encouraged to report dangerous or inappropriate driver behaviour to the local police. Police will be requested to patrol the area if incidents of inappropriate driver conduct are reported.

### BICYCLES, SKATEBOARDS AND SCOOTERS

We encourage students to walk, ride, scoot and skate to school, and participate in annual Ride 2 School days. The school provides two locations on site for students to store bikes, skateboards and scooters. **The riding of bicycles, roller skates, skateboards or scooters in the school grounds is not permitted** and students should dismount bicycles at gates and walk these directly to the bike racks. Bicycles are the responsibility of the owner and should be locked using a chain and lock to prevent theft. Children are not permitted to handle or interfere in any way with a bicycle belonging to another person.

Each year children in grades 5-6 participate in a Bike Education Safety Program (Term 4). Staff take children through a series of safety and skills lessons. Parents will be notified of these programs through the school newsletter and notices from your class teacher. Children must have a roadworthy helmet and bike to participate.

### OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE (OSHC)

This program is operated by the YMCA. Details and cost of the program are available by contacting the YMCA in Bendigo or accessing the YMCA website.

## YARD DUTY

Teachers rostered on yard duty wear fluorescent vests so that children can easily locate a teacher if they require assistance. Children are encouraged to speak with a yard duty teacher if they have a problem so that issues can be resolved in a timely manner. If you are concerned about an incident that occurred in the yard or classroom, please contact the office and a member of the leadership team will follow up.

### Yard Duty times are as follows:

8.35 – 8.45am	Before classes
10.45 -11.30am	First recess
1.30 -2.15pm	Second recess
3.20 -3.35pm	After classes

**Outside these times, the school yard is not supervised and children should not be present in the school yard.**

## PARENT- SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

### SENTRAL SCHOOL APP

The Sentral app is a free application used by the school to send information and reminders to parents on upcoming school events and activities. The school newsletter is also available to parents each Friday afternoon through the Sentral app.

**The app is also an important part of the school's emergency management plan.** The app can provide update information to parents in the event of an emergency. All parents are encouraged to download the app for this reason. Go to the Sentral website or your app store to download the Sentral app for your device.

### WEBSITE

The school website provides resources that parents can access including school policy documents. General communication is via the Sentral app.

**Castlemaine PS website:** <https://www.castlemaine.nps.vic.edu.au>

### PERSONAL RECORDS

The school keeps confidential records for each child. It is essential that we be informed of any changes to a family situation. Such items as changes of address, telephone number, guardianship, emergency contacts etc. are important to the welfare and safety of your child. If your contact details, emergency contact details or other information change, please ensure that you update these details **in writing** with the office. All matters are treated with confidentiality.

### CONTACTING TEACHERS

Good communication between parents and the school is strongly encouraged. Should you wish to meet with your child's teacher, you will need to arrange a suitable time via email or by phoning the office. Information and meeting requests can also be sent to the teacher in note form or in the students' diary. Parents can also request a time to meet with the Leading Teacher or the Principal to discuss any concerns. The school will schedule parent teacher meetings at different times throughout the year.

***Please do not interrupt morning preparation time or lessons and do not make contact with teachers outside of their work hours (8:30 -5pm). If the issue is urgent, please contact the general office.***

### NEWSLETTERS & NOTICES

The newsletter is published on Friday on the **Sentral school app**, with additional information and reminders posted on Sentral via the newsfeed. From time to time, your child may also bring home a hard copy notice relating to activities

in the school. You will be alerted to hard copy notes via Sentral. If you think you may have lost or mislaid a notice, please contact the office as spare copies are generally available on request.

### MOBILE PHONES AT SCHOOL

The Department of Education has introduced a state-wide school mobile phone policy. ALL students who bring a mobile phone to school are required to present these to the office each morning for secure, safe storage. Phones can be collected on departure. The school has a secure cabinet for the storage of student mobile phones. Parents can contact the office if they need to get a message to their child within school hours.

**No student is permitted to take photos or any other recordings of others on school property using a mobile phone.**

NOTE: Teachers are required to carry mobile phones in accordance with our Emergency Management Policy.

## MAKING PAYMENTS

### MONEY AND NOTES

Money and notices should be deposited in the secure letter box in the front office. All notes and money should be in a sealed envelope together with the child's name, the amount of money and the activity on the front of the envelope. Parents are encouraged to buy a box of envelopes at the start of the year so that notes and money can reach their intended destination. Please be careful of some self-sealing envelopes as \$2 coins can slip out the ends of the sealed areas.

NOTE: The school takes no responsibility for loose money or notes left in classrooms.

### EFTPOS AND ONLINE PAYMENTS

We encourage parents to take advantage of our Eftpos and online payments available through the office, especially when it comes to paying larger amounts of money for camps and excursions. The office is open before, during and after school.

## STARTING SCHOOL

### PREP TRANSITION TO SCHOOL

Each year in Term 3, primary schools and kinders meet to develop the transition process. Schools conduct 4 transition sessions for kinder children who will be attending the school the following year. These are conducted in November and December. At these sessions, children participate in a variety of hands-on activities in the classroom setting. Parents are encouraged to depart for a short while to facilitate the development of relationships between the child and teacher.

At Castlemaine Primary School, parents who have their first child attending school are encouraged to attend the parent briefings operating concurrently with the children's transition program. The parent program generally covers the following topics and is conducted over 3 sessions:

- (i) Introduction to the school and curriculum, and uniforms
- (ii) Preparing your child (and self) for school, and school fees
- (iii) Managing anxiety and helping your child at school

### PREP ATTENDANCE IN TERM 1

During February, prep children will not attend school each **Wednesday**. This rest day in the middle of the week will assist with the transition from Kinder to longer hours and school routines.

## COLLECTING PREP CHILDREN

Prep children should be collected after school from the asphalt area near their rooms. This is to ensure that your child leaves the school under adult supervision and learns to cross roads appropriately.

## SCHOOL ENTRY ASSESSMENT

To ensure we know your child and their academic needs as early as possible, the Prep teachers will implement a series of assessment tasks during February. These tasks will involve some literacy and numeracy activities and discussions with teachers. The information from these assessments provide benchmark data enabling teachers to determine your child's current knowledge and skills and to adapt programs to suit their learning.

## EARLY YEARS LITERACY PROGRAM

The Early Years Literacy Program focuses on a strategic, balanced and comprehensive approach to literacy. The key features of this program are:

- Focused two hours of literacy per day
- A balanced mix of reading, writing, speaking and listening tasks
- Regular monitoring of student progress
- Targeted assistance for students requiring extra support

# LUNCHES

## SUPERVISION

Students are supervised for 10minutes when eating meals. Some younger children can take significantly longer than this (especially preps in Term 1). Please assist children with meals by providing foods which are easy for them to manage and eat. Finger foods are ideal for preps as they are easy to eat and to hold with little hands. We encourage parents to provide two reasonable size snacks or meals for their child rather than the traditional small morning snack and lunch meal.

Children are encouraged to put uneaten food back in their lunch boxes so that parents can monitor what their child eats each day. If you find your child (especially P-1 children) are not eating a great deal through the day, please contact your class teacher to discuss how we may be able to support your child with their food.

Our school is a 'bin free' school yard and children are not permitted to take wrapped foods outside to play. Children are encouraged to place any wrappers back in the lunch box for disposal at home. Children are encouraged to bring 'nude food' which means food stored in reusable containers rather than plastic disposable wrappers

## SPECIAL LUNCHES

The SRC and parent group offer special lunches throughout the year to assist with fundraising. Special lunches are advertised through Sentral and the school newsletter. Order forms are sent home so that students can place an order.

## SUSHI LUNCHES

Lunchbox Sushi provides a lunch order option for students every Thursday. Orders must be placed through [www.schoollunchonline.com.au](http://www.schoollunchonline.com.au) by 5 pm Wednesday.

# UNIFORM

## UNIFORM POLICY

The school has a compulsory uniform policy. All children are expected to wear the school uniform every day and to all school activities. The exception will be school camps (overnight activities).

Children are required to wear sunhats during Term 1 and 4 (and as required). Students should wear shoes appropriate for outdoor activities and must have enclosed toes. Boots, thongs, slippers or other such footwear are not appropriate for school activities and can result in injuries.

#### **Non uniform items are not to be worn in place of the school uniform.**

If your child has to attend school out of uniform for a particular reason, please provide a **written note** so that all teachers will be aware that your child will be out of uniform for the day. Where children repeatedly attend school out of uniform, parents will be contacted. Our uniform provider is Beleza.

#### **Beleza Uniforms**

207 Barker St. Castlemaine  
Mon, Wed, Fri 10am – 1pm  
Saturday 10am – 1 pm  
Tues, Thu, Sun closed

#### **LOST PROPERTY**

**Please name all items of clothing, drink bottles and lunch boxes.** Named items will be returned to their owners. Unnamed clothing will be put on display for identification and collection periodically, with unclaimed clothing donated to a charitable society at the end of each term.

#### **ART SMOCKS**

There is no need to provide an art smock as the school has class sets of art smocks which all children should wear during art sessions involving paint, glue, etc.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL AND OTHER PARENT GROUPS**

#### **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The School Council is an organization representing parents and staff which oversees the operation of the school. Parents are elected to Council in February/March each year and serve a two year term. Council is responsible for school development and for developing and reviewing school policies.

#### **PARENTS COLLECTIVE**

The Parent Collective is an informal group of parents who provide positive support the school through various activities throughout the year. These activities include special lunch days, the annual Christmas party, class parties, fetes, support with transition programs and many other events. Meetings are held at the school usually two to three times a year, or more regularly if needed. New parents with an interest in actively supporting the school are always very welcome. Meeting dates are advertised in the newsletter and via Sentral.

#### **GARDEN CLUB**

Each week we conduct a garden club at recess time. The club is run by parent volunteers and so is dependent on their availability. The club is open to all comers.

## VISITORS TO SCHOOL AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

### SECURITY AND SAFETY

The safety of students and employees is considered one of the highest priorities within the school. **A school is a workplace subject to industrial laws and regulations just like any other workplace. As such, all teachers and students have a right to a workplace free from harassment, intimidation and aggression of any kind. They also have a right to their personal privacy.**

Any person who disrupts the normal operations of the school, or is considered a potential threat to the safety of staff and/or students may be ordered to leave the property by the Principal or representative. If the nature of the threat is considered serious, this may trigger an emergency lockdown of all classrooms and police notification. A trespass order may be issued which will prevent any further access to the school grounds or buildings. A trespass order will result in police intervention each and every time it is contravened and may result in formal charges applying.

While the school encourages parents to participate in a variety of volunteer programs, the Principal and teachers have the right to determine if any individual may or may not participate in school activities or enter classrooms. Schools are not public places but work places for students and teachers. **Access to the school is granted subject, at all times, to appropriate conduct and respect for the school as a workplace. Disruption to the operation of the classroom or programs may result in this privilege being revoked.**

Access to classrooms is conditional on appropriate conduct and language at all times. Not all people are well suited to working with children in a classroom and while the school encourages parents to participate in a variety of volunteer programs, the Principal and teachers have the right to determine if any individual may or may not participate in school activities or enter classrooms. A Working with Children Check (WWCC) is required before working in a school as either a volunteer or employee.

**As part of our security procedures, all visitors must sign in at the office before going to a classroom or other area to work or participate in volunteer activities.**

## EXCURSIONS

### EXCURSIONS

Excursions are an important part of the school program and begin in the Prep year. Participation in camps, excursions or other school activities is conditional on:

- A signed permission form
- Full payment prior to the activity commencing
- Appropriate and reliable behaviour by the child prior to, and during the activity

## CPS LIBRARY

### LIBRARY DONATIONS

The school relies on fundraising and the generosity of the community to keep the library stocked with up to date and engaging books. Donations to our school library are most welcome. Community members have the opportunity to make cash donations or can choose to purchase a book off the wish list to buy and donate.

### LIBRARY BAGS

Children are encouraged to bring along a library bag before books are borrowed. Each child will have the opportunity to borrow from the school library each week. Borrowing is a privilege and the borrower is responsible for the care and return of books borrowed.

# SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

## SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

Castlemaine Primary School has a well-established School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) programme that promotes a positive learning environment. The SWPBS identifies the expectations for students, staff and parents within our school community. The goal is to use this framework to recognise the positive expected behaviours associated with our school values - **Respectful, Responsible, Learning and Community**.

### What is SWPBS?

SWPBS (School Wide Positive Behaviour Support) is an evidence-based, school wide, proactive approach, which emphasises the instruction of social skills, data-based decision making and the prevention of problematic behaviour. While fostering positive behaviours and interactions, SWPBS also improves academic performance. It aims to create a positive school climate, a culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all school community members.

### Reinforcing Positive Behaviour

To reinforce positive behaviour, students are 'rewarded' for making good decisions. These rewards encourage and maintain appropriate behaviour, while teaching students to work toward accomplishing learning and personal goals.

### Consequences for Poor Decisions

As much as we try to reinforce positive behaviour, there are times when students make poor choices and may face disciplinary consequences. The main goal of any disciplinary action is to help the student learn from their mistake and make better choices in the future.

### Specific Components

- 1. Behavioral expectations are clearly defined.**  
The expectations are linked to our four core values, **Respectful, Responsible, Learning, and Community**.
- 2. Behavioral expectations are taught.**  
The underlying theme is teaching behavioural expectations in the same manner as any core curriculum subject. Expectations are taught to all students in all settings throughout the school.
- 3. Appropriate behaviors are acknowledged.**  
Appropriate behaviours are acknowledged on a regular basis through praise and system-wide incentive programs.
- 4. Negative behaviors are corrected proactively.**  
Restorative practices are used to mediate disagreements and work through problems.

### Some examples of how you can use positive behaviour strategies at home include:

- Talk about the school values (Respectful, Responsible, Learning, and Community)
- Discuss what happens in a school day
- Support students to complete home learning tasks
- Recognise and reward generous positive behavior, such as doing chores or homework without being asked

# STUDENT HEALTH AND SAFETY

## IMMUNIZATION CERTIFICATES

The provision of a School Entry Immunization Certificate is a Department of Education requirement. These certificates can be obtained from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ph: 1800 653 809) or from any Medicare office.

## MEDICAL ISSUES

Any children who have medical issues such as allergies, anaphylaxis, asthma, eczema etc. must provide a current medical form. This provides staff with an appropriate care plan to be developed. Any changes to the child's medical status must be communicated to the school as soon as possible.

## MEDICATION AT SCHOOL

1. Any medicines sent to school should be brought to the office and the parent must provide clear written instructions of times and dosage.
2. As schools are not permitted to administer pain relief tablets to children, parents must complete a written note and provide a tablet to school if they wish to have one provided to their child.
3. All tablets/medicine must be in the original packaging/container.

## ALLERGIES AND ANAPHYLAXIS

We currently have a number of children who have allergies to certain foods including one child who can have an anaphylactic reaction to nuts and eggs. It is extremely difficult to avoid potentially harmful food products coming into the school so the best approach is to ensure community members are aware of what foods can be dangerous to others, and ensure that children understand the importance of good hygiene as a way to minimise the risk to those children with allergies.

We can all support these children and minimise their risk of exposure to egg and nut products by:

- **Good hygiene practices:** teach your child to wash their face and hands with soap and water. This is critical if your child has eaten or handled eggs and/or nut products.
- **Help your children become more familiar with the contents of various foods they may have in their lunch boxes.** If certain foods have nuts or egg in them, if this is known to the teacher and child, they can then take appropriate steps to ensure the risk to others is minimised.
- **Choose foods which do not contain eggs or nuts where possible.**
- **Avoid peanut butter and Nutella at school. These products, more than any other, can stick to hands and faces and be left on objects touched by children.**

## HEAD LICE

Head lice can be a problem where ever young children gather together. Head lice can be transferred from one child to another quite easily. If a child is found to have live head lice, parents are notified to collect their children from school. The child can return to school once an approved treatment has commenced.

Two treatment options are available:

1. **Chemical shampoo** purchased from a chemist. It is important to note that the chemical treatment DOES NOT necessarily kill all lice or eggs and follow up treatments will be required.
2. **Comb and conditioner** method of removing head lice and eggs. This is more time consuming but a safer option for the child.

### To minimise infestation by head lice:

1. Tie long hair back each school day (this includes boys).
2. Be vigilant and check your child's hair regularly at home.
3. If you find signs of infestation, treat your child as soon as possible.
4. Contact the school to inform us so that we can notify all parents through the newsletter that head lice are in the school, and encourage them to take quick action.

## INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Infections can spread quickly at school. Some illnesses can have serious after effects, accordingly, the School Medical Service exclusion list must be followed. **If your child does not have a full immunisation certificate, they may be excluded from school for the duration of an infectious disease outbreak.**

- Chicken Pox - For at least 7 days after the beginning of the illness and until the last lesion has healed.
- Conjunctivitis - Until discharge from eyes has stopped.
- Diphtheria - Until 2 negative swab tests have been received at intervals of not less than 48 hours - the first swab taken 72 hours after cessation of antibiotics or chemotherapeutic agents.
- Head Lice - Students are to be withdrawn from school until appropriate treatment (i.e. lotion applied) has been administered.
- Impetigo (School Sores) - Until sores have fully healed. Child may be permitted to return provided appropriate treatment is being applied and that sores are properly covered with occlusive dressings.
- Measles - For at least 7 days from the appearance of the rash or until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.
- Mumps - Until fully recovered.
- Ringworm - Until appropriate treatment has commenced unless ordered by the School Medical Officer.
- Rubella (German Measles) - Until fully recovered and at least 4 days have passed since the appearance of the rash.
- Scabies - Until appropriate treatment has commenced unless ordered by School Medical Officer.
- Scarlet Fever - Until medical certificate of recovery is produced.
- Tuberculosis - Until a medical certificate is produced stating that the patient is no longer infectious.
- Viral Hepatitis - Until a medical certificate of recovery is produced or where no medical certificate is available the child may be re-admitted on subsidence of symptoms provided that at least seven days have passed since the onset of jaundice.
- Whooping Cough - Excluded for 4 weeks or until a medical certificate of recovery is produced.

### SICKNESS AT SCHOOL

Should your child become sick at school, you or your emergency contact person will be notified and asked to pick the child up. Children who are unwell should not be sent to school as we cannot cater for sick children. If your child has a minor injury at school, staff will apply appropriate first aid and place a note informing you of the incident.

**NOTE: Our staff do not have the qualification, facilities or equipment to appropriately diagnose and manage student injuries or illnesses at school. Parents are advised that if their child's injury or illness persists, you must seek qualified medical advice. In the event of a serious accident, an ambulance will be called without hesitation. Parents are strongly encouraged to take up an ambulance subscription as any costs associated with medical treatment are the responsibility of parents.**

### SCHOOLING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

All Victorian schools are subject to restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Victorian Chief health Officer advises the government on the most appropriate strategies for managing this outbreak. Schools may be impacted by restrictions. As these restrictions can change significantly depending on state/local circumstances, all parents are advised to regularly check the school newsletter for updates on school operations.

### SMOKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

The Government has declared our school buildings and school grounds to be smoke free zones. We ask that all visitors to our school respect this requirement. Drinking of alcohol on school premises is also not permitted.

**NOTE: Management of all aspects of your child's health is a parental responsibility. The school is required to follow health regulations in relation to all infectious diseases and health risks which means that students will be excluded from school in accordance with health regulations.**

## STUDENT LEARNING AND LEADERSHIP

### SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Our School offers a comprehensive curriculum guided by the Victorian Curriculum. Core curriculum areas of Numeracy and Literacy form the basis of our daily learning. The students' learning is enhanced through the study of other

curriculum areas: Science, The Arts (visual and performance), Technology, Health and Physical Education, Interpersonal Development, Humanities (Geography & History).

Specialist teachers deliver programs in The Arts (performing and visual), and French extending learning opportunities for children. A strong emphasis is placed on providing a settled learning environment with a focus on the core subjects of English and Mathematics.

Please contact the Leading Teacher or Principal if you would like to discuss school programs or curriculum in greater detail. Additional information can also be found on our school website.

### **SCHOOL STRUCTURE**

Our school's class structures will vary from year to year. The Department guidelines recommend that classes in the early years (Prep-2) should be no larger than 21 where possible, and grades 3-6 should be no larger than 26 where possible. Allocation of students to classes is a complex process which takes place in November each year. This process is guided by the class Formation Policy (see our website). Parents are advised that requests for specific teachers or the placement of students in specific classes is contrary to this policy.

### **INQUIRY LEARNING**

Inquiry-based learning is a student centred or active learning approach that takes as its starting point the natural process of inquiry, building on this to develop information processing and problem-solving skills. The focus is on 'how we know' rather than 'what we know', with students actively involved in the construction of their own knowledge'.

### **INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

Students in Years 3 – 6 use Chromebooks to support learning through Google Classrooms. Students in Years F-2 use technology on occasion to support their learning. Interactive screens are used by teachers and students during whole class instruction or small group work.

### **HOMEWORK**

There is an expectation that all children read every night at each grade level. From time to time classroom teachers set homework tasks such as spelling, maths, research or project work. If you or your child are unsure of the expectations in relation to a homework task, please contact your class teacher for clarification.

### **STUDENT LEADERSHIP PROGRAM**

This program operates in grades 5 and 6. The students are divided into various work groups and each specialises in a particular area. For example one group is responsible for organising and hosting each weekly assembly. Another is responsible for developing and publishing the annual school magazine, other groups manage the sports store, others fundraising etc. The aim of this program is to provide children with experiences in working in real life work situations which encourage leadership skills, cooperative and collaborative skills, understanding of deadlines and responsibility.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

Students in years 1 to 6 vote each to elect new SRC members every February. The role of the SRC is to communicate ideas and concerns to school leadership. The SRC also plays an important role in co-ordinating the student leadership programme.

## **ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING**

### **REPORTING TO PARENTS**

Initial meetings with parents take place in Term 1. This is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher and for you to provide background or relevant information which may support your child's learning and school experience. Formal

report meetings are held at the end of Semester 2 (June). Parents will be provided with a time to meet with your child's teacher to discuss their progress. Formal written reports are provided to parents twice a year at the end of Term 2 and Term 4. If a parent feels there is a need to meet with their teacher at any other time, please contact the office to make a mutual time to do so.

## VISION & VALUES

### VISION

Castlemaine Primary School's vision is to empower students to reach their personal best.

Castlemaine Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Castlemaine Primary School support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance

### VALUES

Castlemaine Primary School's values are Respect, Responsibility, Learning and Community.

We are respectful towards ourselves and each other, our school and personal resources, and our built and natural environment.

We are responsible for our own behaviour, for our school and personal resources, and our built and natural environment.

We are committed to learning, developing skills and strategies that will help us succeed in life.

We are committed to community, developing positive relationships within our school, local and global communities.

## POLICIES

### POLICY DOCUMENTS

Policies around a range of issues that arise in schools are developed to guide and support school operations. Local policies are developed and approved by school council. Some other policies are developed by the Department of Education and operate in all schools. Policies are periodically reviewed by School Council to ensure they appropriately reflect practice across the school. Our school website has a series of policies for parents to refer to. Please go to:

<https://www.castlemaineps.vic.edu.au/>

## BUSHFIRE SEASON – SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR CODE RED DAYS

Fire danger ratings and warnings are used in Victoria to provide clear direction on the safest options for preserving life.

**SCHOOLS AND CHILDREN’S SERVICES LISTED ON THE DET BUSHFIRE AT-RISK REGISTER (BARR) WILL BE CLOSED WHEN A CODE RED FIRE DANGER RATING DAY IS DETERMINED IN THEIR BUREAU OF METEOROLOGY DISTRICT.**



**Castlemaine Primary School has been identified as being one of those at high bushfire risk and is listed on the BARR.**

### BUSHFIRE SEASON –NOTIFICATION OF CLOSURES

Where possible, we will provide parents with up to four days notice of a potential **Code Red day closure by letter and via our Sentral school app.**

Once we are advised of the confirmation of the Code Red day we will provide you with advice via the Sentral app and a hardcopy notice provided to the oldest child in the family (if time permits this).

**Once confirmed, the decision to close will not change, regardless of changes in the weather forecast.** This is to avoid confusion and help your family plan alternative care arrangements for your child.

**It is important to note that:**

- No staff will be on site on days where the school is closed due to a forecast Code Red day.
- Out-of-school-hours care will also be cancelled on these days.
- School camps will be cancelled if a Code Red fire danger rating day is determined for the Bureau of Meteorology district in which the camp is located.
- Depending on which Bureau of Meteorology district is impacted, bus route cancellations will affect our school.

**On these Code Red days families are encouraged to enact their Bushfire Survival Plan – on such days children should never be left at home or in the care of older children.**

For those of us living in a bushfire prone area, the CFA advise that when Code Red days are forecast, the safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Code Red day.

### WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

- **Download the Sentral App** so that you can receive updates on closures and emergency management.
- **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.
- **ENSURE WE HAVE YOUR CURRENT CONTACT DETAILS**, including your mobile phone numbers. Keep in touch with us by reading our newsletters, and by talking to your child’s teacher or any other member of the teaching staff about our emergency management plan.
- Most importantly at this time of year, if you’re planning a holiday or short stay in the bush or in a coastal area, you should check warnings in advance of travel and remain vigilant during your stay.
- If your child is old enough, talk to them about bushfires and your family’s bushfire survival plan.
- **You can access more information about children’s services closures on the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development website – see**  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/pages/closures.aspx>
- For up-to-date information on this year’s fire season, visit the CFA website at [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au) or call the 24-hour Victorian Bushfires Information Line on 1800 240 667.

## CODE RED DAY FAQ

### **What is a planned closure?**

Schools and education and care services (children's services) identified as being at the greatest risk of bushfires will be pre-emptively closed on days determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner as having a Code Red Fire Danger Rating.

### **Why are we pre-emptively closing schools and children's services?**

The Department's priority is the safety of its staff, students and children. On a Code Red day all facilities on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register will be closed.

### **Who makes the decision to close a school or children's service?**

The decision to pre-emptively close schools and children's services is made by the Department, based on a Code Red day being determined by the Emergency Management Commissioner.

### **How will I know if my school or children's service is likely to close this fire season?**

Schools and children's services considered to be at risk have been included on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register and informed of their status on the Register. Further information on the Register is available from this website.

### **How much notice will I have if my school or children's service is going to be closed?**

It is intended that families will be provided with as much notice as possible of a planned closure. However, if unexpected weather patterns are experienced, closures may happen at short notice.

The final decision to close a school or children's service will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. Schools and children's services are expected to communicate planned closures to families.

Families are encouraged to ensure that their bushfire survival plan always includes alternative care arrangements for children in the event of a planned closure. No child should be left at home alone or under the supervision of older children.

### **Who will tell me that my school, kindergarten, or child care centre will be closed?**

You will be directly advised by your school or children's service. Information will also be published on this website.

### **What happens if the forecast changes?**

If the Bureau of Meteorology downgrades the risk forecast in the days leading-up to a planned closure, the closure will still go ahead to avoid confusion.

The final decision to pre-emptively close a school or children's service will be confirmed no later than 1.00pm the day before the planned closure. Once the decision to close has been confirmed, there will be no change – regardless of improvements to the weather conditions the following afternoon or overnight. This will help limit confusion and provide time for parents and guardians to make alternative care arrangements for their children.

### **What should my school-age child do if their school is closed?**

Families are encouraged to ensure that their bushfire survival plans include alternative care arrangements for children in the event of a planned closure. Given the expected severity of the weather conditions, children should not be left unattended or under the supervision of older children.

### **Is it likely that my school or children's service will be closed for consecutive days? If yes, how will I know?**

It is possible that schools and children's services will be closed for consecutive days. Information about ongoing closures will be published on the Department's closures page. Where possible, schools and children's services will contact families directly to confirm their ongoing closure(s).

To get warnings and find out what's happening, listen to ABC local radio, call the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667, go to [cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au), and/or check the Fire Ready telephone application.

**On average, how many days does the government predict that schools and children's services will need to close due to Code Red days?**

While we cannot predict the exact number of days, it should be noted that there has not been a determined Code Red day since January 2010.

**When my school or children's service is closed, will any staff remain on site?**

No. The safety of staff and children is our main priority. Schools and children's services have been advised that no-one is to remain on site when their facility is closed due to high-bushfire danger risk.

**Will there be times when my school is closed but another school not far away remains open?**

Yes. If your school is on the Bushfire At-Risk Register then it will close on Code Red fire danger days. Schools not far away may remain open because they are not on the Bushfire At-Risk Register.

**Does this also apply to children's services?**

Children's services that are on the Bushfire At-Risk Register are required to close on Code Red fire danger days. However because such services are not owned or managed by the Department they may also decide to close on other high-risk days. Services are expected to advise all affected families of such decisions.

**Can I keep my child away if I'm concerned about the risk of fires - even if my school or children's service remains open?**

Yes. If your family decides to enact its bushfire survival plan, the most appropriate place for your child may be with you and your family, and not at school or in child care. You must advise your school or childcare provider as soon as possible of your child's absence.

**My child travels by bus to school. Will bus routes be closed on Code Red days?**

Similar to Code Red facilities that pre-emptively close on determined Code Red days, bus routes servicing these schools will also be cancelled on Code Red days. Bus routes from schools not on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register that enter high-risk areas will be pre-emptively closed as well.

**Will school off-site activities (e.g. camps and excursions) continue to operate on high-bushfire risk days? What happens if my child's off-site activity is threatened by fire?**

Yes, off-site activities will continue throughout the year as they are an important part of school programs. However, off-site activities in high bushfire risk areas affected by a predicted Code Red day will be cancelled or rescheduled. Your school will assess the likely threat of fire when organising off-site activities during the summer fire season. If an off-site activity is threatened by fire, your school will enact its emergency management plan.

**What have schools and children's services on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register done to prepare for the summer fire season?**

Schools and children's services on the Department's Bushfire At-Risk Register have:

- Reviewed and updated their emergency management plans and submitted them to their region
- Held staff training sessions and drills with students and children
- Been offered training in emergency management planning
- Undertaken works, where required, around their facilities to manage vegetation

**What else can I do?**

- Ensure that your school or children's service has your **current emergency contact details**
- Review and update your family bushfire survival plan
- Keep in touch with your facility via the Sentral App
- Look out for more information about activities your local community is planning
- Go to [www.cfa.vic.gov.au](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au) or call 1800 240 667 for more information

