

Altona Primary School Newsletter



23rd November: TERM 4 WEEK 8



Principal's Report

It is hard to believe that we are already in Week 8 of our final term for 2023. The final four weeks of school are busy, however our classroom routines and expectations will remain the same, with a continued focus on the wellbeing and academic growth of our learners. Attendance at school every day is still incredibly important as we near the end of the year, with our classroom lessons and events planned up until our last day, which is the 20th of December.

END OF YEAR REPORTS

As we head towards the end of term, our teaching staff are currently determining student progress against the Victorian Curriculum. These judgements are made based on a number of assessments and observations. Along with this, teachers are working collectively to moderate work samples against the curriculum. Staff meetings across the last fortnight were allocated to teachers working in cross level teams to support consistency with judgements across the school. End of semester reports will be published through Compass on Friday the 15th of December.

FACILITIES - NEW TOILET BLOCK

I am very pleased to share with our community that we have been allocated an additional toilet block as part of the Victorian School Building Authority next tranche of relocatables. Following a requested review of our facilities, this project is being fully funded by the VSBA and will be a welcome addition to our school.

At this stage, pending a full site inspection, the toilet block will be located where the sandpit currently is, near the rear entry to the school on Railway Street. This will provide the classrooms in this space with closer proximity to a toilet facility. The proposed timeline will hopefully see these toilets landed onsite before the beginning of the 2024 school year.

Dates to Remember

24th November
Student Free Day

1st December
2024 Prep Transition Session 3

5th December
Grade 3/4 Excursion

7th December
Xmas Concert

8th December
2024 Prep Transition Session 4
Whole School Transition Session 1

12th December
Grade 6 Graduation

13th December
Grade 3/4 Excursion

14th December
Grade 6 Mystery Tour

20th December
Last Day of Term 4
1.30 Dismissal



2024 SCHOOL STRUCTURE

In 2024, with a projected enrolment of 510 students, we will operate with a confirmed 21 classes, with the following structure:

- Three classes at each year level in Grades P-2
- Six composite Grade 3/4 classes
- Three Grade 5 and three Grade 6 classes
- 5 specialist subjects:
 - Art, PE and Music weekly for the whole year
 - Auslan and STEM weekly for a semester each.

Allocations of classes are based on a number of factors, including student needs, staffing profile, DET requirements around class sizes and budget allocation. We have looked closely at the needs of all of our students to ensure we are able to balance academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs in the most effective way across the cohorts of students. Each year this may look different, particularly as our enrolment numbers change.

We will continue to run composite classes in Grade 3 and 4 in 2024, based on the needs and sizes of the cohorts at these year levels. Evidenced by student outcome data, we have successfully run Grade 3/4 classes this year and, with the exception of 2022, APS has had a composite structure for many, many years. Composite classes are very common in schools, with most local schools implementing this structure. They provide more opportunity to achieve a balance of needs, while working within the requirements of class sizes.

Teaching in all classes is differentiated to meet the needs of the academic spread of all students in the class. Lessons are designed and planned to meet students at their level of the curriculum and our instructional model and teaching strategies enable this. We do not deliver instruction in any of our classes that only enables students to access curriculum at a single year level and there is not one class in our school that has all students performing within a single year level range. Our staff are incredibly experienced and work collaboratively to meet the needs of all students.

We are currently in the process of finalising our 2024 classes, a process that takes an incredible amount of time to ensure we achieve, above all else, the best balance for our learners' academic, social, emotional and behavioural needs. We have also continued to enable student preferences and parent input which are additional considerations that are also taken into account.

We are looking forward to sharing our staffing profile and class allocations at our first whole school transition session scheduled for Friday the 8th December, and a second session on Friday the 15th December. What I can share with you at this stage is that our staffing structure is a stable workforce and an incredible group of teachers, leaders and support staff.

PARENT/CURRICULUM PAYMENTS

In a previous newsletter I advised that our payment arrangements for 2024 had been approved by our school council.

Whilst government funding ensures that all students have access to the essential resources they need for their education, funding does not adequately cover the cost of schools accessing desirable resources that further enhance learning. Parent Payments enable schools to cover the cost of day to day stationary and consumable resources that all students will use. This then allows us to allocate funding to budgets that further enhance the schools' resources and infrastructure.

This year, Parent Payments have enabled us to use our budget to purchase much needed decodable texts, sets of quality literature texts, iPads, computers, robotics and resources for our Art, STEM, PE and Music programs.

At a time when the cost of living is increasing, our School Council has ensured that the cost of our Curriculum Payment will not increase next year as we have carefully reviewed our resources and budgets. Payments can be made in January and further information will be communicated through Compass.



MENTAL HEALTH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Mental Health in Primary Schools Program provides funding to employ a mental health and wellbeing leader (MHWL) in every government school in Victoria. The program is being implemented across Victoria over a staged rollout between 2023 to 2026, with the rollout at Altona Primary School commencing in 2024. I am pleased to share that Christine Sperling, who is currently working as our Inclusion Learning Specialist, has been appointed to the role of MHWL for 2024. MHWLs are qualified teachers who work across the school to implement a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing for students, staff, and families based on a broad knowledge of the needs of the school community. This program will be a great addition to ensure the social, emotional and behavioural needs of our learners are further supported.

SHOWCASES OF LEARNING

As we head toward the end of term, we have a number of things already scheduled during what will also be a busy time outside of school with end of year celebrations, gatherings and local events. With this in mind, we will not be holding our Showcases of Learning of this term. Students will start to bring home various work samples and workbooks over the coming weeks which will provide an opportunity to see some of what has been achieved this year. Along with this, end of semester reports will be published on Friday the 15th December, with our final day of school the following Wednesday the 20th December.

Enjoy the last days of November before the busy season commences.

Sarah

Values Awards: Week 5, 6 and 7



COMMUNICATION AT APS

COMPASS: Ongoing communication. Newsfeed items contain reminders and timely information. All payments and consent for events and activities are made through Compass.

NEWSLETTER: Reports what is happening and coming up at APS. Published fortnightly via Compass and the school website.

YEAR LEVEL NEWSLETTERS: Outlines the learning program of each year level. Published twice per term.

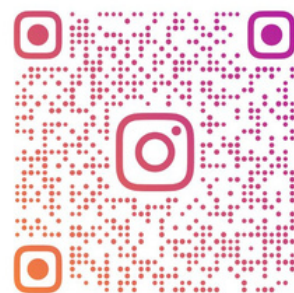
SCHOOL WEBSITE: Information about the school, parent info and whole school calendar.

INSTAGRAM: Visual reminders and photographic updates. Posts updated weekly.



FOLLOW US ON INSTAGRAM

@altonaPrimaryschool



ALTONAPRIMARYSCHOOL





Whole School Skipping Morning

FFC Canteen Day



Somers Camp

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING @ APS

Grade 3 Sleepover



Grade 2 excursion to The Shrine

Grade Prep excursion to Scienceworks



Term 4 Week (6-7) Highlights

Starting every morning with croissants, whole grain toast, cereal, and banana bread. To break up the breakfast items, we introduced some raisin toast and Nutri Grain cereal. With Spring full swing in action, we have focused on outdoor sports and activities. Post teatime has included a fun group game of trivia before heading outdoors. Outdoor activities has included flag tigg, everyone is it, soccer, and gaga ball. Some exciting themes have taken place such as Movie World and Detective week, to celebrate our natural curiosity and movie characters. We continue to design new décor for the service to welcome in active change.

Parent Guardian Information

TheirCare Program

Phone: 041 912 6837

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TheirCare HQ: 1300072410

Program Coordinator

Dominic Frate

2IC

Yasmin Copeland

Program Assistants

Amanda Robinson

Lachlan Khan

Bibiana Guzman

What's on Term 4 Week 8-9

During week 8 and 9 we will enjoy all things sports and decorations, with outdoor group games and challenges. During week 9 we will endeavour to expand our craft table with stationary material extending to decorative crafts. With new table games being introduced we are focusing on encouraging friendly competition games. With the Christmas holidays slowly approaching, it is never too early to start decorating. Our staff and children will collaborate to create a Christmas wonderland in anticipation of the summer holidays, and Christmas festivities.

POLICY REMINDERS

If you need to book/cancel, please do so via fully booked 24 hours prior to avoid a \$4 fee. Send us an email, text, or pop in to let staff know if you are collecting, cancelling, or booking your child. There is a \$1/minute fee for each child that is picked up after 6:15pm. Parents/guardians must be present with child on arrival to before and after school care.



Past Week Menu	BSC	ASC
MONDAY	Waffles, Croissants, Cereal, Toast with Jam or Vegemite. Variety of milk and alternatives.	Chicken Tenders
TUESDAY	Banana Bread	DIY Ham & Cheese Cracker Stacks
WEDNESDAY	Croissants	Pizza
THURSDAY	Cereal	Yoghurt & Berries
FRIDAY	Toast with Jam or Vegemite. Variety of milk and alternatives.	Pasta & Cookies with Popcorn

