

CHRISTMAS HILLS

Primary School

Newsletter



15th December - Term 4 - Week 11



Bundoora Farm

This week we will be heading off to Bundoora Farm on Wednesday (17th December) for our end of year "Fun Day". We are expecting some hot weather so we will need to ensure that students are sun-safe and wear appropriate clothing. More information to follow.

Principal's Message

This is our final newsletter for 2025 and what an incredible year we have had with so many wonderful learning experiences! Throughout the year, our students have embraced opportunities to learn both inside and beyond the classroom, engaging in our garden and bush school programs, and developing independence, resilience and curiosity. Our students should feel incredibly proud of their growth and achievements.

Our concert last Thursday was just wonderful, and the students shone on stage in their production of, "Christmas at the Great Barrier Reef". The smiles on their faces said it all and we were so proud of them! Thank you to Jodie and Megan for their work behind the scenes especially with the stage props and to Jayden for coordinating the students' individual musical items. Their performances showcased their growing confidence and musical growth over the year, and they were an absolute delight to watch. Thanks again to all our staff for their contributions in making the night so successful and joyful, and to our families and friends who attended.



Important Dates End Of Term 4

- 16th December - Last swimming session
- 17th December - End of year fun day - Bundoora Farm
- 18th December - Last day for students - 2:00pm finish

Important Dates Start Of Term 1 - 2026

- 28th January - First day of school for all students
- 4th March - Small schools swimming carnival
- 2nd April - Last day of Term 1 - 2:00pm finish

[More dates to follow](#)

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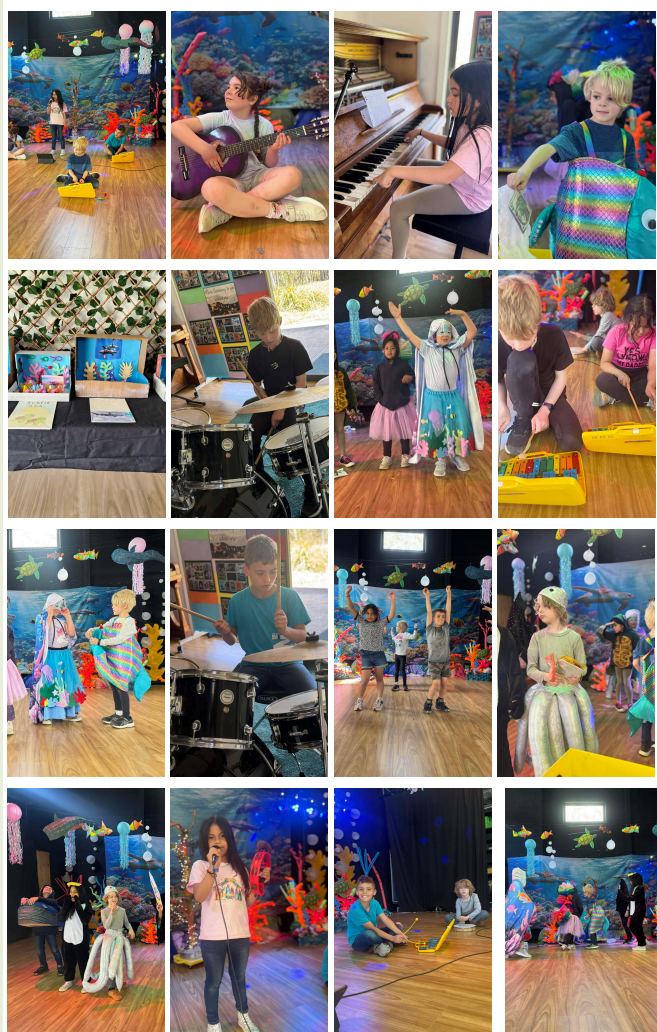


Our student reports for Semester 2 have been uploaded to Sentral for you to view. Please let us know if you have any problems accessing them as we can print them off for you if needed. Well done to all the students on their learning and achievements this year. We will be arranging a catch up early in term 1 next year with all our parents/carers to discuss learning goals for the year ahead. Also, student portfolios will be going home on Thursday. Please take some time with your child/children to share and discuss some of the learning they are most proud of and to celebrate their progress throughout the year.

Just a friendly reminder that we will be finishing school on Thursday (18th December) at 2.00pm. Teachers and staff will be at school on the Friday completing planning for 2026 and getting spaces organised for the start of the new school year. Students are expected back to school on Wednesday 28th January 2026.

Finally, I would like to sincerely thank families for all their amazing support throughout the year. On behalf of all our staff, I wish you a wonderful Christmas and enjoy the holiday break. Stay safe and I will see you all next year!

Maria Parks
Principal





STAPS OSHC HOLIDAY PROGRAM

January Holidays 2025

Tues 13th, Thurs 15th, Tues 20th, Thurs 22nd January

Tuesday 14th January
Mini Chef Day!
Cooking fun making
lots of yummy treats



Full Fee: \$95
subsidies apply in most
cases

Thursday 15th January
Water Fun!
Keep cool and have
fun with water fights
and more



Full Fee: \$80
subsidies apply in most
cases

Tuesday 20th January
**Let's Woodwork and
Craft!**
Building fun - making
and creating together



Full Fee: \$95
subsidies apply in most
cases

Thursday 22nd January
**Games and
Technology!**
Relaxing end of
holiday OSHC



Full Fee: \$80
subsidies apply in most
cases

To Book In ...

Email: st.andrews.ps@education.vic.gov.au
or message the OSHC mobile on: 0427 245 921

STAPS OSHC Vacation Care is available to all STAPS students and is also available to students from other schools.

ALL students *MUST* have completed a 2025/2026 STAPS OSHC enrolment form, and supplied any relevant medical plans.

Please note that STAPS OSHC has a maximum number of 15 bookings for each day.

Tuesday 13th January and Thursday 15th January

Tuesday 20th January and Thursday 22nd January

Costs: Flat rate per student per day applies - special activities vary the price - see above
(Child Care subsidies apply to eligible families if registered)

Times: Available from **8:30 am to 5:30 pm.**

Children can attend for the whole day or part of the day, but please note that the flat fee applies.

Activities: The day will include outside games, relaxing "downtime activities" (possibly including watching a movie/short show), and **Special Activities (as listed above)**

Food: **BYO LUNCH** with Fruit, and Snacks offered on the day

What else: Students *MUST* bring a hat and water bottle each day, and wear closed-toe shoes and suitable sunsmart clothing.

OSHC Educators: Tracey, supported by other staff as required

Please note re Fire Ratings: If the day is EXTREME or CATASTROPHIC Fire Danger Rating, STAPS OSHC Vacation Care will be cancelled on that day.

Schools in Category 0, 1 and 2 on the Bushfire At-Risk Register

School preparations for the bushfire season

Each year, we undertake a range of activities to ensure the safety of our school and to prepare for bushfires and grassfires.

An important part of this process is communicating to parents what will happen when certain fire danger ratings are issued to help ensure the safety of students and staff.



Our school has been identified as being in one of the highest fire risk categories - BARR 1 .

On elevated fire danger days, schools in the highest levels of risk take pre-emptive actions to minimise the risk of being caught in a fire in these conditions.

Our school will action its pre-emptive plan for **relocation** on a day forecasted as **Extreme fire danger rating** in our **local government area (LGA), Nillumbik**.

Our school will also **close** on a day forecasted as **Catastrophic fire danger rating** in **Central fire district**.

We will let you know when we are enacting our pre-emptive action plan by Sentral.

Please be aware that no one will be on site on days where the school has enacted this plan.

As part of preparing our school for the fire season, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan and reprioritised any maintenance works that may assist in preparing for the threat of fire and cleared our facility's grounds and gutters.

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, checking our website <https://www.christmashillsps.vic.edu.au/>, by talking to your child's teacher or any other member of the teaching staff about our emergency management plan.
- Make sure your family's bushfire survival plan is up-to-date and includes alternative care arrangements if our school is relocated or closed due to elevated fire danger or closed due to a Catastrophic fire danger rating. 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 enacting 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, 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

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the department's policy?

The Department of Education annually assesses the fire risk of all schools and early childhood services with the support of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). They are allocated a category of risk (categories 0 to 6). Schools and services that are categories 0-3 are published on the [Bushfire At-Risk Register \(BARR\)](#). Schools at some risk of bushfire and grassfire are published on the [Category 4 List](#).

The department's [Bushfire and Grassfire Preparedness Policy](#) requires schools at high risk of bushfire to enact pre-emptive action plans based on LGA-level fire danger forecasts. Conditions can vary significantly across the wider weather district, so using local forecasts helps us to respond appropriately to risks in our local area and maintain stability and educational continuity for our students and school community. This policy is consistent for all schools at high levels of risk and this approach is supported by emergency services.

The policy also requires that all schools and early childhood services on the BARR and the Category 4 list 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.

Why do we use the LGA forecast?

When the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) provides public fire danger rating forecasts, they use fire weather district areas. In Victoria, there are 9 fire weather districts, which include numerous Local Government Areas.

As conditions can vary significantly across a wider weather district, the department uses BoM LGA forecasts for some pre-emptive actions to respond appropriately to risks in the local area and maintain safe educational continuity for students and the school community. LGA forecasts are a subset of the weather district ratings and while not issued publicly, are provided to emergency services and government departments to support planning and operational activities.

This policy is consistent for all schools at high levels of risk and this approach is supported by emergency services, including the Country Fire Authority (CFA).

What do we do when our LGA has a different fire danger rating to the wider fire weather district?

As we respond to local conditions, there may be days during the fire season when our fire weather district, **Central** is forecast as an Extreme fire danger rating, but our LGA is at a lower level of fire

danger. On these days our school operations will continue as normal; however, we will be taking action in line with fire services' advice by:

- checking our Emergency Management Plan and taking any necessary preparedness actions
- actively monitoring our local conditions and warnings
- having plans and procedures in place for if a fire starts to support us to take immediate action.

While our school will continue to operate, we encourage our school community to consider their own [bushfire survival plan](#) and reassess any travel through bushfire risk areas. We encourage you to follow your family bushfire survival plan and the advice of emergency services.

There may also be days where our LGA is forecast as Extreme fire danger, but Central is not. On these days we **will** enact our pre-emptive action plan.

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

Our school will also **close** on a day forecasted as **Catastrophic fire danger rating** in **Central fire district**.

Closure of the school due to a Catastrophic fire danger rating will be enacted when the BOM forecast and related public safety messaging is confirmed. Due to uncertainties in the forecast, the timing of this confirmation may vary. Information regarding potential or confirmed Catastrophic fire danger days will be communicated to you by Sentral and a letter home.

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 enact 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.