

**Be Kind
Be Safe
Be Your Best**



PYALONG PRIMARY SCHOOL

Established 1878
10-14 Bourke Street,
Pyalong, Victoria, 3521

Phone: 03 57 851 291
email: pyalong.ps@education.vic.gov.au

We are a Child Safe School

Principal: Jessica Bowen-Duarte

Teachers: Laura Straghan - Grade F/1, Stephen Cadusch - Grade 2/3, Michelle Gyton-Taylor / Louise Wilson- Grade 4/5, Tayler Gready/David Close - Grade 5/6, Michelle Gyton-Taylor - Indonesian
Brooke Maher - Sport & Wellbeing, Erin Peterson—Student Wellbeing Leader

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

February

Friday 6th—Grade 5/6 Life Saving
Nagambie Bus departs 8:30

Friday 13th—Cluster Swimming
Carnival Lancefield Pool
Whole School

Friday 27th—District Swimming
Seymour Outdoor Pool

March

Monday 9th—Labour Day Public
Holiday

Wednesday 18th Young Leaders
Grade 6

April

Thursday 2nd—Last Day Term 1

Pyalong Primary School Policies
can be viewed on the school
web page.
www.pyalongps.vic.edu.au



**February
5th—Madeline**

Student Leaders 2026

Congratulations to our Student Leaders for 2026.

Captains—Kiera and Sid

Vice Captains—Lexie and Eddie

Wellbeing Captains—Brax and Sophie



PLEASE RETURN FORMS

- ◆ **Grade 5/6 Life Saving**—by 5/2 (Compass)
- ◆ **Swimming Permission**—by 11/2 (Compass)
- ◆ **Medical Forms**—by 11/2 (Paper)
- ◆ **Code of Practice**—by 11/2 (Paper)
- ◆ **National Student Wellbeing Program Consent**—by 11/2 (Paper)
- ◆ **Local Excursion Permission**—by 11/2 (Paper)
- ◆ **State School Spectacular EOI Gr 5&6**—by 4/2 (Paper)
- ◆ **School Council Nominations**—by 10/2 (Paper)





SAFE
KIND
YOUR BEST

SCHOOL-WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT
Bronze Award 2022

SWPBS AWARDS

Friday assembly—Fortnightly usually commences at 2.50pm. All Welcome

Schoolwide Positive
Be Safe Be Kind Be Your Bee
Behaviour Support

**Our focus this week is:-
Be Organised**

First Assembly for 2026 will be on Friday 6th February at 2:50pm.
Assembly will be conducted fortnightly.
ALL WELCOME


Pyalong General Store Lunch Orders
Lunch orders are available on Fridays only starting on **Friday 20th February.**
A price list/menu is included in this newsletter.

Sun Smart—Hats

All children are required to wear wide brimmed hats (not caps) at school this term.

No Hat = No Outdoor Play

Please ensure your child has a hat with them at school each day and that their name **IS** clearly on it. Hats are available from the office for \$8.00 each.



Students should not be at school before 8:30am. Students in the grounds before this time will be taken to Before School Care and fees will be charged.

There is no supervision in the yard before 8:45am.

Students will not be permitted into classrooms until the bell sounds at 8:45am.

Please ensure your child is completing their daily home reading. This is the only required homework. Diaries need to be completed and handed in each day for checking.

If the temperature is forecast to be 35c or above, students will be kept indoors during playtimes. Structured play activities will be available for students.

CATASTROPHIC DAYS

As a school on the bushfire risk register, Pyalong Primary School is serious about fire safety. We have an emergency management plan and schedule regular evacuation and shelter in place drills. Once a CATASTROPHIC DAY is declared NO students are to attend school on this day. No change in weather conditions (ie sudden cool change) will alter the decision to close.

It is important that you have your own fire plan in place and are ready to follow it. It is also very important that we have correct contact numbers for you and that you respond to messages or phone calls as quickly as possible.

Welcome back everyone!

It is so lovely to be back! Our students all settled in very well and there is a real buzz of excitement around the school. I would like to take this opportunity to extend a very warm welcome to all of our new families; we are very excited to have you as part of our school community. This year we have 79 students at the school which is so fantastic!

The Importance of Regular Attendance in Primary School

Regular attendance at primary school is crucial for a child's learning, development, and future success. Attending school every day ensures that children have access to quality education, build strong social skills, and develop positive learning habits that will benefit them throughout their lives.

Why Regular Attendance Matters

1. Academic Success

Each school day builds on the previous one and missing even a few days can create gaps in a child's learning. Subjects like literacy and numeracy require consistent practice, and frequent absences can make it harder for children to keep up with their classmates.

2. Social and Emotional Development

Primary school is where children learn essential social skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving. Being present every day helps them build friendships, develop confidence, and feel a sense of belonging.

3. Establishing Good Habits

Regular attendance teaches responsibility and commitment—qualities that will help children in secondary school, further education, and eventually in their careers. Children who frequently miss school may struggle with routine and self-discipline later in life.

4. Meeting Legal Requirements

In Victoria, school attendance is compulsory for children aged 6 to 17. Parents or guardians must ensure their child attends school every day unless there is a valid reason, such as illness. Schools are required to track attendance and follow up on unexplained absences.

How Parents Can Support Regular Attendance

- **Set a Routine:** Establishing a consistent morning and bedtime routine helps children be ready for school on time.
- **Communicate with the School:** If your child is struggling with attendance, speak to their teacher or school staff for support.
- **Promote a Positive Attitude:** Encourage your child by showing interest in their school activities and celebrating their progress.
- **Plan Appointments Wisely:** Try to schedule medical or personal appointments outside school hours whenever possible.
- **Plan vacations in the school holiday periods**

Attending school regularly gives children the best chance to succeed. Let's work together to ensure all of our students get the most out of their primary school years!

Pyalong Primary School – Homework Plan

Reading is one of the most fundamental skills a child can develop, and fostering a love for reading at an early age can have lifelong benefits. While schools play a crucial role in teaching reading, daily reading at home is just as important. Encouraging children to read at home each day helps build their vocabulary, comprehension, confidence, and a love for learning. At Pyalong Primary School, we understand the impact that good reading habits have on educational outcomes which is why we choose to have daily reading at home as our only homework requirement. The benefits of reading are significant and just 10 - 15 minutes a day of reading practice can make a huge difference. To support our reading program, we ask that you spend time each day reading with your child/listening to them read and signing the diary. Each child will have their home reading diary checked daily at school.

Class programs for 2026

Our specialist programs for the year commence this week with Art, Health and Physical Ed, Science, Inquiry, Library, Indonesian and Kitchen (for Year 6 students). The whole school timetable is attached to this week's newsletter.

Mrs Taylor will continue to teach Indonesian across the school and is team teaching the Year 4/5 classroom. Robyn will be providing small group sessions with students each day to support literacy and numeracy development. Mrs Maher is teaching Sport across the school and will continue in the role of Wellbeing Leader and Disability Inclusion coordinator. Art will be taught by Mrs Barlow who will provide weekly one-hour sessions. Erin will be here three days a week supporting wellbeing initiatives at the school. We are currently advertising for a Music teacher. Classes are currently being covered by Mrs Barlow.

Our major focus for this year is English which will be a major component of staff professional learning sessions throughout 2026. Reading will continue to be a focus and the best way that you can assist is to ensure that you read with your child/ren each night at home. Please ensure that you complete your child's home reading diary each day.

Parent Volunteers

We are always seeking parent volunteers to assist across the school. Whether it be reading with students, helping in the garden or kitchen program or as a member of our parents and friends club. If you can assist in any way, please give me a call, or come into the office for a chat. We would love to have you!

Sun smart

Students will need to wear a wide-brimmed hat from the start of September until the end of April, as part of the school's Sun Smart policy. We abide by the 'No Hat No Play' rule so if your child/ren does not have a hat, they will be required to play in the large shed at recesses and lunchtimes. If you would like to provide sunscreen for your child, the roll-on type is possibly the most easily stored in schoolbags. There is also sunscreen available in each classroom.

School Council

The beginning of a new school year also signals the time for the reconvening our School Council. This year we have some members who have come to the end of their tenure from School Council. I would like to take the opportunity to thank Kate Creed, Julia Gaffney, Megan Hayes and Merrilyn Liu for their hard work and dedication to ensuring best outcomes for our school and students. Your efforts are really appreciated. These individuals can renominate for positions. **Please consider completing a nomination form** if you are interested in the overall operation of our school and would like to have some input in the present and future direction of the school. School Council usually meets twice a term. A nomination form is available at the office. Nominations will close next Tuesday the 10th of February at 4pm.

HOT LUNCHES

We have pie-warmers for heating lunches. Students' names are to be clearly marked on the container or foil wrap and will be delivered to the room at lunch eating times. Forks and Spoons **must be supplied** from home. No student should bring food requiring a knife.

DAILY TIMES

School commences each day at 9:00am and the roll is taken before 9:10am. Please sign your child in at the office if you arrive after 9:00am for any reason. Please sign your child out at the office if you need to take them early for an appointment. Students **MUST** be signed in or out by an adult.

Recess begins at 11:00 am until 11:30 am

Lunch is eaten in the classroom from 1:30 - 1:40 pm

Lunch recess is from 1:40 - 2:20 pm

School finishes at 3:30 pm

Please ensure that you pick up your child/ren promptly after school each day as it minimises anxiety for the child and ensures that staff Professional Learning sessions can occur in a timely manner.

MEDICATION IN SCHOOL

Under guidelines from the DET, any student who is to take **any** medication at school **must** have a completed Medical Authority Form, available from the office, outlining the type of medication, dose and times and must be signed by a parent/guardian.

All medication is to be brought to Admin for safe storage. No student is to have any type of medication in his or her school bag.

ABSENCES

All student absences must be explained by a note or phone call as required by DET [the Department of Education and Training]. Unexplained absences will be followed up via a phone call to parents on the day of absence.

ASTHMA

If your child suffers from asthma, you will need to complete an "Asthma Management Plan" available from the office. This form will need to be completed by the child's doctor and will be maintained on file at the school. It will need to be updated each year. Your child should supply their own puffer and spacer.

ANAPHYLAXIS

If your child has anaphylaxis it is important you supply an Anaphylaxis Action Plan approved by your doctor. You must also supply an EPIPEN

COLLECTION BOX

Located at the front office of the main school building, is a Collection Box which is used to return surveys, permission forms, money for excursions, etc.

Please ensure all money sent to the office is safely secured in an envelope with child's name, amount enclosed and what the money is for.

CONFIDENTIAL STUDENT INFORMATION**Are your emergency contact details up to date?**

It is important for the school to have up to date information for each child. We are particularly concerned with Medical and Emergency Contact information. It is important that the school is able to contact parents/relatives during school hours when necessary. Please ensure you have provided up to date emergency contact details for your child/children.

CAMPS, SPORTS AND EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

The CSEF will provide payments for eligible students to attend camps, sports and excursions.

Families holding a valid means -tested concession card or temporary foster parents are eligible to apply. \$400 per year will be paid for eligible primary school students. Payments will go directly to the school and be tied to the student. There is no refund to the parent of this money. Please see the school office for more information.

NEWSLETTER

The school publishes a newsletter on a fortnightly basis. Each other week a bulletin is sent out of important dates. These publications are published to the school web page and emailed to families each Tuesday.

All items for inclusion in the newsletter should be approved by the Principal and handed in to the office by Monday lunchtime.

The newsletter contains:- Information for parents, items from grades, recognition of student/school achievement, and community announcements.

We send forms home to be read and signed. These need to be signed and returned to school. Permission forms for excursions and activities are sent via the COMPASS app. Payments can also be made via COMPASS.

Questions/Concerns?

Please don't hesitate to come and speak to me.

Mrs B

Looking forward to a wonderful 2026! Let's use this year to support one another and spread kindness.

Welcome to Erin Peterson Wellbeing Leader

Hi, I am Erin and I will be here on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

I have a 5 year old son and a 3 year old daughter. We have a pet dog named Nelly and two cheeky rabbits called Zuma and Jamie Elliot.

I love football as does my family. Our household is divided. My son and I go for Collingwood and my daughter and husband go for Melbourne!

I love talking all things pets, football, beach and adventures so come and say hi!



How to Talk to Your Child About Their Day After School

After a big day at school, your child might come home feeling exhausted, excited, or somewhere in between. One of the best ways to stay connected and help them process their experiences is by asking about their day. But instead of asking the standard, "How was school?" which often gets a simple "fine," try these tips for sparking deeper conversations:

1. **Ask Specific Questions** Instead of just "How was your day?" try asking more specific questions like:

- "What was the best part of your day?"
- "Did you learn anything interesting today?"
- "Who did you sit with at lunch?"

2. **Use Open-Ended Questions** Instead of yes/no questions, try phrasing them to encourage more thoughtful responses. For example, instead of asking, "Did you have a good day?" ask, "What made today good?"

3. **Give Them Time** Sometimes kids need a little space to unwind before they can talk. Let them relax for a few minutes before diving into the conversation. Don't push for answers right away if they seem tired or distracted.

4. **Be an Active Listener** When they do start talking, listen attentively without interrupting. Show empathy by validating their feelings, whether they're excited about a new friend or frustrated with a tough class.

Share Your Own Day Kids are more likely to open up when they feel like the conversation is mutual. Share a little about your own day to model how to talk about feelings and experiences.

By creating a routine of thoughtful, open conversations after school, you'll help your child feel heard and supported while building a deeper connection with them.

Kids Helpline

Throughout this year students will be involved in online sessions run by Kids Helpline. These cover a range of topics and also provide information to students about the services provided by Kids Helpline.

Qualified Kids Helpline @ School counsellors use videoconferencing technology to run education sessions about coping strategies, digital safety and citizenship, emotional literacy, help-seeking behaviours and resilience building. Online sessions are interactive, and topics align with our Curriculum.

No personal or demographic student data is captured when participating in the sessions or the feedback survey.

All students in the class will take part unless you would prefer that they didn't. This is an opt-out activity. Please advise the classroom teacher if you would like to opt-out of these sessions.

Term Dates

Term 1

27 January—2 April

Term 2

20 April— 26 June

Term 3

13 July—18 September

Term 4

5 October—17
December



Annual privacy reminder for our school community

Our school collects and uses student and parent personal information for standard school functions or where permitted by law, as stated in the [Schools' privacy policy](#) and the [Schools' privacy collection notice](#).

Our Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy <https://www.pyalongps.vic.edu.au/page/167/Policies>, describes how we collect and use photographs, video and recordings of students. The policy also explains when parent consent is required and how it can be provided and withdrawn.

We ask parents to also review the guidance we provide on how we use [Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for Education](#) safely at the school and what parents can do to further protect their child's information. If after reviewing the guidance, you have any questions or concerns regarding your child using Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for Education, please contact the school.

For more information about privacy, refer to: [Schools' privacy policy: information for parents](#).

This information is also available in eleven community languages:

- Amharic
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Dari
- Gujarati
- Mandarin
- Somali
- Sudanese
- Turkish
- Urdu
- Vietnamese

Excursions/Incursions

Cluster Swimming Carnival and Water Activity Day

Friday 13th February

Grades F—6



Swimming Carnival at Lancefield Pool.

We will be competing with Tallarook and Willowmavin Primary School

Students in grades 3-6 will participate in 25m swimming races (non confident swimmers will participate in appropriate water activities) and students in F-2 will participate in small group rotation activities.

Children will travel by bus leaving Pyalong Primary School at 9am and return by 3:30pm

BRING: Bathers, Towel, goggles (if required), sunscreen, broad brimmed hat, snack, lunch and plenty of water to drink.

Wear school uniform with bathers underneath.

Cost—Free

Thank you to Parents and Friends Club for paying for the bus transport.

PLEASE RETURN YOUR EXCURSION PERMISSION AND MEDICAL FORMS
BY THURSDAY 11TH FEB

Life Saving Victoria—Grades 5 and 6 Nagambie Lake—Friday 6th February



Grade 5 and 6 students will participate in a Life Saving Victoria education program designed to promote safety in open water environments.

Bus departs Pyalong PS at 8:30 am and returns at approximately 1:30 pm.

BRING: bathers, towel, sun top, sunscreen, snacks, lunch and water in a drink bottle.

Wear school uniform with bathers underneath.

Enclosed shoes **MUST** be worn for both dry and water based activities.
Thongs are not suitable.

Please return consent and \$15 payment by Thursday 5th February.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

Every Victorian child should have access to the world of learning opportunities that exist beyond the classroom. The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund helps ensure that no student will miss out on the opportunity to join their classmates for important, educational and fun activities. It is part of making Victoria the Education State and the Government's commitment to breaking the link between a student's financial circumstances and their outcomes.

CAMPS, SPORTS and EXCURSIONS FUND (CSEF)

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

CSEF is provided by the Victorian Government to assist eligible families to cover the costs of school excursions, camps and sporting activities.

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or support an out of home care student you may be eligible for CSEF. A special consideration category also exists for asylum seeker and refugee families. The allowance is paid directly to the school to use towards expenses relating to camps, excursions or sporting activities for the benefit of your child.

The annual CSEF amount per student is \$400 for all school students.

HOW TO APPLY

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

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

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

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

Check with the school office if you are unsure.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about CSEF visit:
<https://www.vic.gov.au/camps-sports-and-excursions-fund>



STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE / AMBULANCE COVER

As a public school, Pyalong Primary School does not provide any insurance for lost or stolen property for staff and students. We also **do not** provide any health insurance cover. In the event of an accident causing injury to a child we must call an ambulance to ensure the child receives proper medical attention. The fees for the trip in an ambulance will be payable by the family whose child requires care. This is Department of Education and Training Policy.

Before and After School Care

Bookings can be made directly with the office on 5785 1291 or by calling Mandy on 0460 022 546 (Please note new mobile number and delete the old number). Please ensure bookings are cancelled by 1:30pm if not required to avoid being charged.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Monday—Friday 7.00am—8.45am
Monday—Friday 3.30pm—6.00pm



First week back we are working on our Hand Print banner.

Foundation Wednesday Rest Day—February

During February, Foundation (prep) students will have Wednesdays off as a rest day.

Remaining Rest Days—4th, 11th, 18th and 25th February.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club will now be on Mondays commencing Monday 9th February

from 8.00am

Items being served for breakfast will be cereal, toast with vegemite or honey, fruit cups and milk.

Breakfast Club is run by Brooke Maher.

All Students Welcome

EFT Payments

EFT payments can be made to the following account

Please quote your surname and brief description of what it is for, (eg: BASC)

Pyalong Primary School

BSB: 083644 Acct: 51579 0937

CHILD SAFE POLICY

As per our Child Safe Policy if you are Volunteering or Visiting at the school you are required to sign in and out at the office. A Working with children check (WCC) is required for all volunteers. Jess will provide a Child Safety information briefing for volunteers.

Don't Forget Your Water Bottle!



Bottles must contain water only

Classroom News

We have been settling into school practices and routines in the F/1 classroom. We use mini whiteboards everyday in English as part of our daily phonics program, and also regularly in Maths. Students have commenced learning about how we use these, practising the 3 important terms of 'Chin it' (show their work), 'Bin it' (clear their work) and 'Park it' (place their learning materials down). We are ready to start using our whiteboards for our learning this week and can't wait to show you our learning using these throughout the year.



Foundation / 1



The Year 2/3 class have made a great start to the year, coming in ready to learn and getting used to new routines.

Grade 2/3

Classroom News

The 4/5 class working on their fluency.



Grade 4/5

The 4/5 class has settled back into their routines beautifully, transitioning into their new classroom with confidence and ease. They have quickly re-established expectations, shown independence, and embraced their learning space with enthusiasm. It's been wonderful to see such a smooth start along with positive attitudes. We are looking forward to the year ahead.

The Grade 5/6 students have spent the first week at school setting up our classroom environment and routines. We have had a very successful week together and know we are going to achieve great things this year.

Grade 5/6



Morning Routine

1. When the inside bell goes, we will enter the classroom quietly and put our bags away.
2. We will get our Reading Diaries out and put them into the tub, open at today's page.
3. Complete our wellbeing continuums.
4. Look at the daily timetable and set up our tables for the morning with the things we will need. (Whiteboards, book box, book).
5. Check jobs, flag bearers and seating plan.

Lunch time routine

1. Wait for the teacher to ask us to organise ourselves for lunch.
2. Pack away anything you don't need on your table after lunch. The only things left out would be your drink bottle and your pencil case.
3. Get your lunch out of your bag/pie warmer and sit at a table to eat it.
4. Put all of our rubbish in the bin and make sure the tomato sauce has been put away.
5. Move our pencil cases and water bottles off our tables and onto our chair. Push our chairs in.

Afternoon routine

1. Wait for the teacher to ask us to pack up for the end of the day.
2. Pack EVERYTHING away. Nothing is to be left on tables.
3. Put our chairs on our tables and make sure we get any spare chairs for people who are away.
4. Make sure our bags are packed, including our Reading Diary, and put our bags under our tables.
5. Sit on the floor and wait for the teacher to tell us it is time to go. Grab our bags. The teacher will walk us out to the gate and send us home with our families.

**Starting
Friday
20th
February**

LUNCH ORDER MENU 2026

AVAILABLE FRIDAYS ONLY

HOT FOOD

Party pie	3 for \$2.00
Four n' Twenty Pies	\$3.00
Four n' Twenty Sausage Rolls	\$3.50
Mini Pizza –ham & pineapple (or pizza pocket)	\$2.50
Dim Sims with/without soy sauce	3 for \$2.50
Hot Dogs with/without sauce	\$3.00

DRINKS

Juices (250ml)-	
Orange, Apple, Apple/Raspberry, Apple /Blackcurrant or Tropical	\$1.50
Water -600ml	\$2.00
Pop Tops (250ml) -Orange, Apple or Apple/Blackcurrant	\$2.00
BIG M 250ml-Chocolate or Strawberry	\$2.60

SNACKS

Choc Chip Muffins	\$2.50
Cookies –Smartie or Choc Chip	\$2.50

- Please note, due to stock shortages sometimes substitution will occur, but every endeavour is made to supply as close as possible to what is ordered.
- Please ensure all lunch orders are written on a paper bag with the order, child's name, classroom teacher's name and correct amount enclosed. For food hygiene reasons, change cannot be returned with the child's lunch order.
- Orders can also be placed at the Pyalong General Store, directly, if change or paper bag required.

Thank You.