

Somers Primary School



SPS NEWSLETTER

Term 1 - Issue 1 Friday 7th February, 2025

Principal's Report



Dear Families,

Welcome to the 2025 school year! I hope you all had a wonderful summer break, filled with rest, relaxation, and time with family and friends. As we begin this new year, I am excited to see our students return with enthusiasm, ready to learn, grow, and embrace new opportunities.

At Somers Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all students are happy, engaged, and making great progress in their learning. Our core values of Collaboration, Engagement, Learning, and Respect guide everything we do, from the classroom to the playground and beyond. This year, we are thrilled to welcome our new Prep students, who are taking their first big steps into school life. We also extend a warm welcome to any new families joining our school community—Somers PS is a special place, and we look forward to getting to know you all.

Our dedicated team of teachers and staff have been working hard to prepare an engaging and supportive learning environment for every student. We have exciting programs planned, including our focus on literacy and numeracy growth, enriching extracurricular activities, and opportunities for student leadership.

We also encourage strong partnerships between home and school, as we know that when families and educators work together, students thrive. Please keep an eye on our newsletters, Compass updates, and upcoming events—we look forward to connecting with you throughout the year.

There was lots going on at our school during the Summer holidays. Works have commenced on our Covered Outdoor Learning Area, with footings for the columns poured, and stormwater and electrical services completed in preparation for the roof structure. Our builders are now waiting for steel to be manufactured for the roof structure, and the anticipated date of delivery for this will be late February. Our students have coped remarkably well without the basketball court area, but we are looking forward to having this play area back hopefully by the start of term 2.

During the holidays we also had some work done to create a space where students can interact with our wellbeing dog Sable off her lead.

Vision, Values and Strategic Direction

At Somers Primary School, we believe learning enhances children's lives and prepares them for success. We apply evidence-based approaches to support children's development. This is how we ensure children are happy, engaged and making great progress at school.

Our school values are Collaboration, Learning, Engagement and Respect (our CLER Values). These values form the basis of the work your child is currently doing in their classroom in the school-wide Engagement Program, where students work with their teacher to create their optimal learning environment for the year.

In 2024 our school review recognised the excellent outcomes that we are achieving. Our 2024 School Performance Report showed the high performance our students are achieving in reading and numeracy, with 90% of our students achieving medium to high relative growth in Reading (compared to 71% in similar schools) and 91% of our students achieving medium to high relative growth in Numeracy (compared to 70% in similar schools). In addition, our 2024 NAPLAN Data outperformed similar schools in the following areas:

- Greater percentage of year 5 students in the 'Strong' and 'Exceeding' categories in Year 5 Reading
- Greater percentage of Year 1 – 6 students with 'At' or 'Above' expected growth in Reading (Teacher Judgement)
- Greater percentage of year 5 students in the 'Strong' and 'Exceeding' categories in Year 5 Numeracy
- Greater percentage of Year 1 – 6 students with 'At' or 'Above' expected growth in Number (Teacher Judgement)

We also saw improvement in all areas of the annual Student Attitude to School Survey, showing that students are feeling safer, more engaged and happier at school.

We also saw a continued reduction in unapproved absences - we are hugely grateful for our families' efforts in ensuring that students are at school learning whenever possible.

This year, we will work towards our strategic goals of reducing the percentage of students who need additional support at school, and increasing the percentage of students who are performing at or above the expected level in literacy and numeracy. We will do this ensuring that our teaching approaches are informed by evidence on what works best. A focus in our new strategic plan is to implement our revised Somers PS Explicit Teaching model, and ensure this is consistently implemented with enhanced observation, coaching and support for staff.

In addition, we remain focused on ensuring our classrooms are calm, respectful and learning focused through the consistent implementation of our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support model, based on our school values of Collaboration, Learning, Engagement and Respect.

We will also be focused on ensuring that students are more emotionally and cognitively engaged in their learning.

Welcome Suong, Mrs Edwards, Ms Jacques, Ms Okey, Ms Luwor!

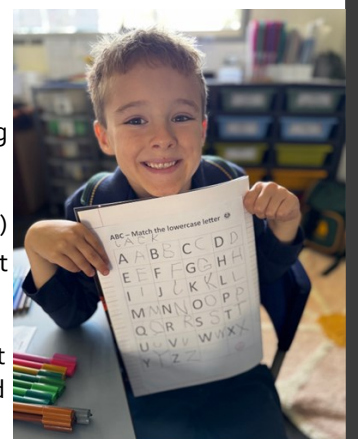
This year we welcome a number of new staff to our school. Suong White will be working in the office on Tuesdays and Fridays – welcome Suong!

Our new teachers include Kate Edwards (1B), Leanne Jacques (1A), Emily Luwor (Prep A) and Olivia Okey (56B). We are so excited to have such wonderful teachers here at Somers PS – welcome to our school community.

Many of our school community will be very pleased to hear that Anneliese Arrott-Watt welcomed baby girl Frankie on Friday 17th January. Congratulations to Anneliese and Tom – we wish your family our best.

Supervision and Safety at School

Please remember that student absences must be reported via Compass or phone on or before the day of absence. Parents will be notified as soon as practicable via Compass if their child is absent without prior notification, according to Department policy. Our absence notification line is available 24 hours a day on 59835546.



The school has a responsibility to supervise students in the school grounds from 8.45am until 3:45pm on school days. The OSHC Program caters for children from 7.00am in the morning, and up until 6.00pm in the afternoons. Please be aware that students cannot be supervised by school staff outside of those times.

Change to Student Details

Please advise the school office staff should there be any alterations to student details such as change of phone numbers of parents and emergency contacts, change of address, changes to a child's medical condition etc.

Messages to Students

We ask that families please minimise ringing the school requesting that messages be passed on to students relating to pick up arrangements. We understand that emergencies do occur and are unavoidable, however, where possible, please make sure your children are advised before they leave home in the morning if there is any change to the arrangements for pick up from school.



Medical Conditions and Medication

If students need to have medication during school hours, parents will need to leave the medication at the school office and complete an "Authorisation for Administering Medication Form". This applies to students requiring both short term and long term medication.

For children who have an Asthma puffer, medication for severe allergies or Epi-Pens, please initially bring puffers, Epi-Pens and medications to the office for processing. These medications will then be given to your child's class teacher for them to securely retain in the classroom.

If your child has a medical condition or develops a medical condition during their time at Somers Primary School, please make sure you advise us of this in writing. If they have a Medical Action Plan for conditions such as Asthma, Anaphylaxis, Serious Allergic Reactions, Epilepsy etc, please make sure you supply the school with a copy of their Medical Action Plan.

School Newsletter

Our school newsletter is generated on a fortnightly basis on Fridays. Families will receive the newsletter via Compass in 2025.

Out of School Hours Care Program

Somers Primary School runs an Out of School Hours Care Program to assist families who require childcare either before school commences or, after school finishes, or both. Enrolment forms for the OSHC program are available from the school office.

Court Orders

If there are any Court Orders currently in place that affect your child, please bring the original orders to the school office so that we can take a photocopy. If there are any particular conditions that need bringing to our attention, please make sure that you advise us at the time of providing the Court Orders.

Parent Volunteers – Working With Children Check

Parents who volunteer to help at school are required to hold a current Working with Children Check which is applied for on-line. Go to: www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/ to apply.

Additionally, you will need to fill out a Somers Primary School Volunteer Register form which is available from the school office. On days when you are volunteering at the school, please sign the Visitor's Register using the Compass Kiosk at the office. All volunteers must abide by our OH&S Guidelines and Child Safety Code of Conduct, available at the office.



School Saving Bonus Reminder and Support

The Victorian Government is delivering the School Saving Bonus (SSB) – a one-off support of \$400 for eligible government school students from Prep to Year 12 in 2025. The SSB helps families cover the cost of uniforms, textbooks, excursions, activities and more. Most families have now received their SSB code(s). I encourage you to take advantage of this government support.

To learn more about the SSB online system, go to the [Victorian Government's SSB Webpage](#).

If you would like to use your bonus for school activities, you can allocate some or all of the bonus using the School Saving Bonus online system. If you have only recently completed your enrolment into the Victorian government school system you can expect to receive your SSB code(s) in the coming weeks. If you have transferred to our school from another Victorian government school, any remaining funds on your SSB code(s) will soon be available to use at our approved school suppliers. We request your patience as this change is processed.

The Department of Education has established a dedicated contact centre to support the SSB. The contact centre can be reached by [completing the School Saving Bonus enquiry form](#) or calling 1800 338 663, between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm on weekdays.

Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF)

If you hold a current Health Care Card or Pension Card that is valid on the first day of Term 1 or Term 2 this year, you may be eligible to apply for the CSEF for your children attending Somers Primary School. If your application is successful, this entitles you to \$154 for each of your primary school aged children. If you think you may be entitled to claim the CSEF for your children and have not already filled out an application form, please call in to the school office with your Health Care Card or pension card and complete an application form by the 4th July. Please be aware that if you received CSEF credit at school last year, we will automatically rollover your eligibility for 2025, and you do not need to apply.

Meet the Teacher Interviews

On Monday 17th February, we will be holding 'Meet the Teacher' interviews. The purpose of these interviews is for families to provide information to teachers about their child, as well as to establish a relationship and communication methods with your child's home group teacher. We hope that all families can make a time to catch up with their child's teacher.

Interviews will be conducted between 12:30pm and 6:00pm, and be 10 minutes in duration. These interviews can be conducted online via WebEx, or in person. Please book these interviews online using Compass.

Assembly

We will continue to hold our weekly assemblies in the BER in 2025. Assemblies take place every Friday between 2:45pm – 3:15pm. All families are welcome to attend.



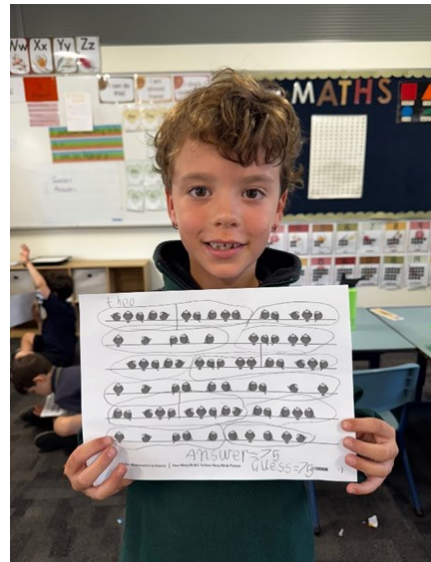
School Privacy Notice

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](#) 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](#) 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, please contact the school.

Regards,

Hugh Greer, Principal

Email: hugh.greer@education.vic.gov.au



Assistant Principal's Report

Dear Families,

Welcome back! Our students have had a great start to the 2025 school year and are settling in well in their new classes.

Creating a Positive Learning Space- Engagement Program

The first few weeks of the school year are dedicated to setting up the classroom learning environment via our school's Engagement Program. This program involves teachers and students working together to establish a positive and productive learning environment, initially through 'getting to know you' activities and working together to build positive relationships within the classroom.

One aspect of this program is to create an agreed set of classroom expectations aligned to our school values of *Collaboration, Learning, Engagement and Respect*. Teachers and students create the foundation of classroom expectations and systems together to ensure a productive environment for learning, free from disruption.



Somers Primary School
Rights and Responsibilities



Everyone has the right to feel
SAFE.

Everyone has the right to be treated with
RESPECT.

Everyone has the right to
LEARN
without being disrupted.



Once Classroom Expectations are in place, students will spend time learning and practising specific expectations. Some examples include; active listening, using the High 5 strategy to solve minor problems and how we move about in the classroom and in other school settings. In addition to the classroom matrix, students are also taught and provided with opportunities to understand and practice our Whole School Expectations.

While it is extremely important for us to recognise students when they demonstrate school and classroom expectations (we do this via CLEAR Cards) it is also important for them to understand the response when behaviours of concern may occur. This means there are no surprises for the students and staff can address these behaviours with a consistent approach.

Matrix of Expectations – Inside

	Specialists	Library	eLearning/Online	All Settings
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We work productively in teams. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We wait patiently to return or borrow our books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We only post things that are constructive and positive. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We get along with others and work together.
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We allow others to learn. We arrive on time in the morning and after each break. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We try reading new books. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We only use educational programs and apps during school time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We try our best at all times.
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We listen to our teacher and peers. We show active listening. We focus on our learning. We have the confidence to give things a go. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are quiet in the library and focussed on our reading. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep passwords and personal information safe and secure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We demonstrate our school values at all times.
and				
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We put our hand up if we have something to say. We look after our belongings and classroom equipment. We keep our classroom and workspace clean and tidy. We work quietly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We handle books carefully. We return books to the right place on the shelves. We leave the library how we find it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We return borrowed equipment in the same condition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We say please and thank you. We listen when spoken to. We use kind words and apologise when mistakes are made. We answer respectfully when asked a question.

Matrix of Expectations – Outside

	Toilets	Moving Around School	Excursions	Play Areas
Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We allow others to use the toilet privately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We walk at the same speed as the class. We line up in pairs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We sit in our designated seats. We take care of other people's property. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We share equipment fairly. We take turns. We use our High 5 to solve problems. We include others. We offer for others to join us.
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use the toilets and leave quickly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We respect learning spaces by walking quietly. We move to class when the music plays. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We complete any set tasks. We represent the values of our school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use equipment for the right purpose. We follow rules, accept referees' decisions and play for the 'fun' of it. We leave the playground when the music goes.
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are quiet in the toilets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We arrive at class on time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We stay with our teacher. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We use equipment safely and for the right purpose. We follow team rules. We share and take turns when playing games.
and				
Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We keep the walls, floors and stalls clean. We flush the toilet. We wash our hands with soap. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We give space to the person in front. We accept who is walking next to us. We keep our hands to ourselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We follow instructions from teachers. We listen to teachers, parents, ES and volunteers. We use please and thank you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We put our rubbish in the bin. We eat in designated areas. We keep our 'hands off' others.

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)

'School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) is an internationally recognised approach with an extensive evidence base that is shown to improve behavioural, wellbeing, and academic outcomes for students. It focuses on teaching and reinforcing positive behaviours while providing targeted assistance to students who may need extra support, leading to a more successful and inclusive learning community. When implemented well, it ensures that all students receive support to maximise behavioural, wellbeing and academic growth.'

Somers Primary School is a SWPBS school. Implementation occurs via The Engagement Program at the start of the year and then re-taught throughout the year to enable students to understand, remember and then practice important skills. Further information can be found in our SWPBS Guidelines via the link below.

[SWPBS Guidelines](#)

Kind Regards,

Kirsty Egglestone, Assistant Principal

Email: kirsty.egglestone@education.vic.gov.au

2025 Term 1 Calendar Dates

Weds 12 Feb	Yr 3—6 Swimming Carnival
Weds 12 Feb	Prep Interviews
Weds 19 Feb	Prep Interviews
Weds 26 Feb	Prep Interviews
Thurs 27 Feb	District Swimming (selected students—further information at later date)
Fri 28 Feb	Inter-school Tennis at Balnarring TC (selected students)
Weds 5 March	Prep Interviews
Weds 5 March	Yr 5/6 Water Safety Program (further information at later date)
Fri 7 March	Curriculum Day
Mon 10 March	LABOUR DAY PUBLIC HOLIDAY
12th to 21st March	NAPLAN testing (Yr 3 & 5 students)
Thurs 20 March	Summer Lightning Prens
Fri 4 April	Colour Run Fundraiser (whole school) - further information at later date
Fri 4 April	Last Day of Term 1—students dismissed at 2.30pm

Student Birthdays

Congratulations to the following students who celebrated or are celebrating their birthdays in January and February:-

JANUARY

Jude A, Darcy Mc, Angus B, Mia R, Theo B, Archie S, Evie G, Josie A, Lily M, Maci Mck, Indy R, Flin F,
River A, Lil J, Ivy R, Nicholas B, Wiley C, Lila W, Sabrina B, Will F

FEBRUARY

Mahlia W, Millie C, Holly F, Safia C, Diesel T, Ben R, Lincoln R, RJ Reardon, Lyla F, Arlo CB, Aura CB, Archie S,
Lewis K, Micah A, Flinders R, Ivy M, Harvey W, Sam B, Lucia V, Van C

Runners Club



Runners Club

Runners Club meets every Monday & Thursday

on the school oval from 8.15am - 8.45am

(Arrive at any time from 8.15 onwards)

Certificates are awarded to all runners

Medals for 100kms+ | Trophies for 200kms+

(Parents/carers & younger siblings are welcome to join in)



Get fit & Have fun!



SOMERS PRIMARY SCHOOL

OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE PROGRAM FOR GRADES PREP –6

2024 Enrollments & Bookings are now open.

WHAT WE OFFER

Our OSHC service provides high quality affordable care that meets the Department of Education's National Quality Framework for primary school children. Our fun packed program includes a variety of craft, sports and other activities in a safe environment.

PROGRAM HOURS: MONDAY—FRIDAY

BSC—7.00AM—9.00AM

ASC 3.30PM - 6.00PM

PROGRAM FEES

PERMANENT BOOKINGS

BSC -\$20.00 - ASC \$21.00

CASUAL BOOKINGS

BSC -\$21.00 - ASC \$23.00



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ENROLLING, CALL 5983 5546 OR EMAIL

somers.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Details are also on our website: somersps.vic.edu.au



FIND US ON FACEBOOK

