



# Heathcote Primary School

## News

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Issue No. 0

Holidays, January 2026

*At Heathcote PS we value... Respect Learning Teamwork Responsibility*

*We acknowledge that we are on the traditional lands of the Taungurung people and we pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging.*

### What's Happening?

2026	Tuesday 27th January	Office reopens 11am—1pm, 3pm—4pm (no students onsite)
Week 1	Wednesday 28th January	Partnership Meetings (details shared via Compass)
	Thursday 29th January	All students onsite (all day)
Week 2	Wednesday 4th February	Foundation Rest / Assessment Day (no Foundation students at school unless attending assessment)
Week 3	Wednesday 11th February	Foundation Rest / Assessment Day (no Foundation students at school unless attending assessment)
Week 4	Wednesday 18th February	Foundation Rest / Assessment Day (no Foundation students at school unless attending assessment)
Week 5	Wednesday 25th February	Foundation Rest / Assessment Day (no Foundation students at school unless attending assessment)
Week 10	Thursday 2nd April	End of Term 1 (early dismissal @ 2pm)

### 2026 - What's Due?

Thursday 22nd January

Partnership meeting booking



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## Have you booked your **partnership meeting?**

**What:** Partnership meetings between home and school (students, parents/ carers, teachers, education support)

**When:** Wednesday 28th January 2026 (15 minutes per partnership meeting)

**Why:** To strengthen connections between home and school, share information and support a smooth start to 2026 as students transition into a new year level.

[Click HERE to book a meeting](#)

Confirmation of the meeting time will be emailed by Friday 23rd January 2026



From September to April, everyone needs to wear a plain coloured, broadbrimmed hat when they are outside. This is part of our SunSmart policy. If you need a hat, the office has got you covered...literally! School hats can be purchased from the office for \$10.

## Holiday Office Hours

**Closed**

Monday 22nd December 2025  
to Monday 26th January 2026

**Open with Reduced Hours**

Tuesday 27th January 2026  
11am—1pm, 3pm—4pm

**Open—Normal Hours**

Wednesday 28th January 2026  
8:30am—4pm

The school email account will be monitored intermittently during the holiday period

# Getting Organised



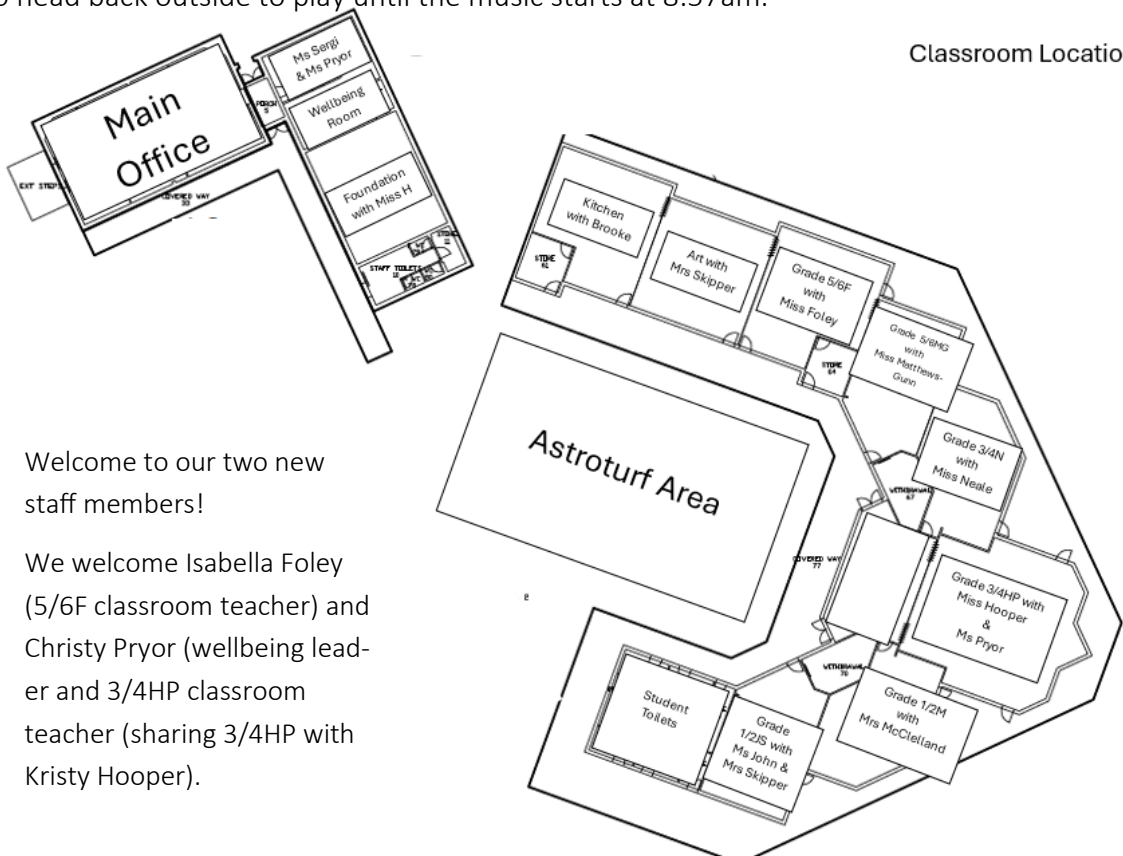
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## What to pack in school bags?

- **Fruit and/or vegetable snacks.** Students have healthy snacks during class time to help maintain focus and concentration.
- **Lunch.** Students tend to eat their bigger meal at Break 1 to provide energy and brain power for the rest of the day's learning.
- **Snacks.** Students tend to eat their smaller snack/s at Break 2 to boost energy levels for the last part of the day.
- A **broad brimmed, plain hat.** Ideally, it will have the school logo on it but any plain (no patterns or logos) hat is still okay.
- A **drink bottle** filled with water (can be refilled at school)
- **Spare clothes** if you think your child might need them. Eg. Due to a toileting accident or from slipping over in a puddle (more applicable for winter time)

## Where to go on the first day?

Classroom doors open at 8:45am. Upon arrival, students should go to their classroom to drop off their bag, unpack belongings and say good morning to staff and classmates. Students might then like to head back outside to play until the music starts at 8:57am.



Welcome to our two new staff members!

We welcome Isabella Foley (5/6F classroom teacher) and Christy Pryor (wellbeing leader and 3/4HP classroom teacher (sharing 3/4HP with Kristy Hooper).

# Getting Organised



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## Daily Timetable

8:45am	<b>Classroom doors open</b> <i>Students take their bag inside and unpack for the day ahead. After doing so, students can go outside to play.</i>
8:57am	<b>Music begins followed by school bell</b> <i>Students make their way to their classroom via the toilets and drink tap (if needed)</i>
9am - 11am	<b>Learning time</b> <i>Includes a healthy snack of fruit or vegetables at approximately 10am and lunch eating time at 10:50am</i>
11am - 11:30am	<b>Break 1</b>
11:30am - 1:30pm	<b>Learning time</b> <i>Includes lunch / snack eating time at 1:20pm</i>
1:30pm - 2pm	<b>Break 2</b>
2pm - 3pm	<b>Learning time</b>
3pm	<b>Home time</b>

Students are encouraged to confirm after school pick up arrangements before starting their school day. For example, will they walk home? Meet a parent/carer in the yard/at the office? Meet a parent/carer at the car park? Will they catch the bus to after school care or catch it home?



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# Settling into a new class

6 tips for parents, carers and families to support your child to settle into a new class.

## 1. Acknowledge their feelings

- **Validate emotions:** Let your child know it's okay to feel sad, anxious, or disappointed. Acknowledging these emotions can reduce anxiety by making them feel understood (Beyond Blue, 2021). You might say, 'I know it's hard to leave a class where you felt comfortable, and it's normal to feel a bit nervous about what's coming next.'

## 2. Focus on positives and familiarity

- **Highlight exciting aspects:** Emphasise the positive opportunities that come with the new class, like meeting new friends, trying different activities, or having a fresh start with a new teacher. This reframing can help children start seeing change as an opportunity.
- **Identify familiar faces:** Point out any friends or known peers who might also be in their new class. Familiar faces can help ease the transition (Dockett & Perry, 2007).

## 3. Encourage problem-solving and independence

- **Plan for success:** Brainstorm strategies with your child to help them feel more comfortable, such as introducing themselves to new classmates, joining group activities, or asking for help when needed.
- **Build coping skills:** Teach your child positive self-talk, like reminding themselves, 'I can handle new things,' which research shows can reduce anxiety and build resilience (Australian Institute of Family Studies, 2021).
- **Model a positive outlook on change:** Show a positive attitude toward change yourself, sharing times when you successfully handled transitions or new experiences. This can set a model for them and show that they can handle new situations too. Let them see that you are confident in their ability to handle the change, which can help them feel more secure.

## 4. Set and maintain predictable routine

- **Consistency and structure:** Establishing a daily routine, including consistent bedtimes, meal schedules, and even homework times, helps children feel secure. Familiarity with routines can help them feel more in control amid changes in their school life (ARACY, 2018).
- **Transition preparation:** If possible, practice aspects of their new routine, such as packing their school bag or visiting the new classroom, to help them feel prepared and ready.

## 5. Encourage open communication with teachers

- **Connect with educators:** Let your child know they can approach their teacher with questions or concerns. Building rapport with the teacher early on can help them feel supported. Communicating with the teacher yourself may also help establish support for your child if any specific anxieties arise.

## 6. Promote friendships and social skills

- **Arrange playdates or social time:** If possible, arrange for your child to meet some classmates outside of school. Positive social interactions help children build confidence in their social skills and see their new class as a space for friendships (Dockett & Perry, 2007).

Supporting a child through a class transition takes time and patience. You can make the adjustment more manageable by recognising their feelings, setting positive expectations, and helping them prepare for the change.

Teachers and school leaders have generally seen it all and will be well-placed to support and provide advice. Contacting your child's school to understand what supports are available, and how other students who may have experienced similar concerns in the past have gone on to excel is often a great way to draw on the experience and expertise from those who are also committed to seeing your child flourish in the new year.

While there's no one size fits all approach, here are 6 tips from Sharon Baker, Principal in Residence at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership, informed by Australian research and the general principles of child psychology.



# GET READY FOR PREP



**1** Practise the journey to and from school

**2** Arrange play dates with families who will have kids at the same school

Encourage independence – skills like dressing, packing and carrying a bag, applying sunscreen and going to the toilet

**3**

Label all belongings

**4**

Talk about and practise any after school arrangements

**5**

**6** Check start and finish times and where to drop off and collect your child

Be positive, get your child excited, and talk about any worries they have

**7**

Visit a library and read with your child

**8**

Start using the name of their new teacher to help build familiarity

**9**

123

**10** Establish predictable routines including dinner, bath time and bed time





## Yard Supervision

The school yard is supervised from 8:45am until 9am. There is an announcement at 8:45am to signal classroom doors are open. Students are able to put their bags in their room, complete any before school routines and monitor jobs before heading back outside to play. The hospital end of the oval and playground are out of bounds before school.

After school, staff are on bus and crossing duty (which includes carpark duty in the main carpark). The main yard is not supervised. Any students who have not been collected by 3:15pm are taken to the office.

After school care is available through Trinity Academy. A bus from Heathcote PS drops after school care passengers at Trinity. For bookings, please contact Trinity Academy on [\(03\) 4411 6803](tel:0344116803)

## Main Car Park

The pick up/drop off zone is not a parking space. Please keep the engine running, drop off or collect your passenger/s and continue on your way so the traffic keeps flowing (and does not bank up onto the road).

When parking in the other section of the car park, please pull all the way into the car park spaces – as close as you safely can to the bollard marking the front of the car park.

Please travel slowly through the car park and check for students crossing between the sections/bays.



## Personal Accident & Property Insurance

The Department (which includes our school) does not have personal accident insurance for students.

If a student is injured at school or while participating in a school activity (including offsite) and requires medical treatment, parents/carers are responsible for all of their child's medical expenses. This includes transport costs such as ambulance costs (which may include an air ambulance if considered necessary)

The Department (which includes our school) does not have personal property insurance for staff and/or students.

Items of personal property that are lost, stolen or damaged at school or during school excursions are not the responsibility of Heathcote Primary School or the Department. Staff and students are reminded not to bring items of value to school or on school excursions.

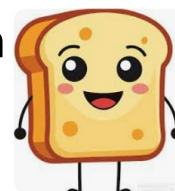
Heathcote Primary School encourages parents/carers to consider obtaining their own accident insurance for students and property of value that may be brought to school.

## Breakfast Club

Tuesday & Thursday\*

8:40am—8:55am

HPS Kitchen



Toast, cereal, milk, fruit available

*\*Starts in Week 2*

## Newsletter and website article: Schools in Category 3 on the Bushfire At-Risk Register and the Category 4 List

*This article has been developed by the Department of Education for schools to publish in their newsletter and school website.*

*This information has been developed to answer frequently asked questions regarding the Bushfire At-Risk Register (BARR) and Category 4 list and our school's closure on a Catastrophic fire danger day in your fire weather district.*

### 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 at risk of bushfire or grassfire and is a **Category 3** school.**



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

Closure of the school due to a Catastrophic fire danger rating will be enacted when the Bureau of Meteorology forecast and related public safety messaging are 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 **Compass and post on the school's private Facebook group**.

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.

As part of preparing our school for the fire season, we have updated and completed our Emergency Management Plan which includes an identified 'Shelter in Place' location if needed. We have also continued to maintain the school grounds to reduce the fuel load.

### ***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](#), 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 closed due to Catastrophic fire danger. 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 actioning 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.

Families are encouraged to action their [Bushfire Survival Plan](#) on Catastrophic fire danger rating days in their district. The safest option is to leave the night before or early on the morning of the Catastrophic day. **On such days, children should never be left at home alone or in the care of older children.**

You can find more information on emergencies, warnings 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 all schools and early childhood services on the BARR and the Category 4 List to 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.

The policy also requires that schools at the highest risk of bushfire (those in Categories 0, 1 and 2 of the Bushfire At-Risk Register) enact pre-emptive action plans based on the fire danger forecast for their Local Government Area (LGA).

### ***Who issues fire danger forecasts?***

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) provides public fire danger rating forecasts each day of the fire danger period using fire weather district areas. In Victoria, there are 9 fire weather districts, which are based on Local Government Area boundaries.

The department uses these forecasts when supporting schools to enact their pre-emptive bushfire actions plans.

# Community



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## Heathcote Primary School

Private group · 120 members

Heathcote Primary School has a Private Group page on Facebook. If you would like to become a member of the group, search for Heathcote Primary School and request to join. Please answer the questions.

Each request is approved individually. For the safety of our students, there are three questions to ensure that only people directly connected to HPS become members. Requests are usually approved within 72 hours. However, if we are unsure of the connection to the school, there may be a delay whilst we do some research. We may also decline the original request and seek further information. Please don't be offended—our intention is to make sure we can identify each person is directly connected to the school.



## Heathcote Primary

Admin



Top contributor

· · 25 December 2025 at 18:37 · 🌐



Merry Christmas Heathcote PS!





Proudly brought to you by Heathcote RSL & sponsors

**Australia day**  
in Heathcote  
Picnic in the Park

Join us to celebrate Australia!  
Sausage Sizzle, Petting Zoo,  
Live Music, Ice Cream!

All Free  
Barrack Reserve Park  
10am - 2pm, **Monday 26 Jan 2026**

Sponsors: Fairy Floss & Snow Cones, Australia Day, Bremer River Band, Gaffney's, Top Dog Liquor, Clan MacLeod Pipe Band, Charlie's Snow Cones, Animals2U.com.au, #sweetsandtreatsco@mail.com, City of Greater Bendigo, Pet Stock and Feed, Heathcote PO & Newsagency, Mandalay Resources, Champions IGA.

\*Assisted by the Australian Government through the National Australia Day Council and using the Australia Day Logo in accordance with the branding guidelines set out in Annexures 1 and 2 to this Agreement, as updated by notice from the NADC to the Grantee.

**FUN IS IN FULL SWING!**

Join Woolworths Cricket Blast  
A safe way to have fun and stay active for kids of all abilities.

HEATHCOTE CRICKET CLUB BLAST SESSIONS  
Session 1 - 9/11/2025 Session 2 - 16/9/2025  
Session 3 - 23/11/2025 Session 4 - 30/11/2025  
Session 5 - 7/12/2025 Session 6 - 8/2/2026  
Session 7 - 15/2/2026 Session 8 15/2/2026

**SIGN UP TODAY!**  
Play Cricket

PROUDLY PRESENTED BY Woolworths CRICKET AUSTRALIA

**Heathcote Residents**

Obtain from Heathcote visitors info centre or pool  
Bring ID

**FREE POOL PASSES** FREE entry to

- Greater Bendigo pools
- Gurri Wanyarra Wellbeing Centre in K/Flat
- Heathcote pool when open!

FREE bus passes between Heathcote & Bendigo

SHOW your summer pass

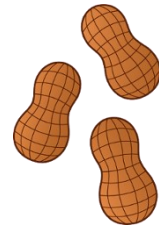
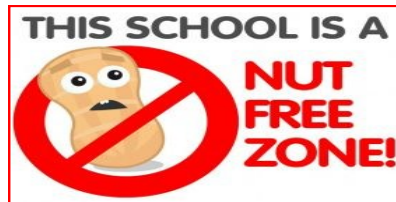
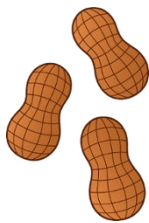
**FREE ENTRY ALL 25/26 SUMMER SEASON**

## School Bank Details

Account Name: Heathcote Primary School Official Account

BSB: 083 001

ACCOUNT: 71 938 5618



School and Department policies  
are available on the  
[school website.](#)

## School Sports and Excursion Fund (CSEF)

If you hold a current Healthcare card or a Centrelink pensioner card you may be eligible to apply for CSEF. CSEF provides financial assistance for families to use for camps, excursions and school sports.

If you think you may be eligible, please contact the school office.



**Remember,  
only WATER  
in your**



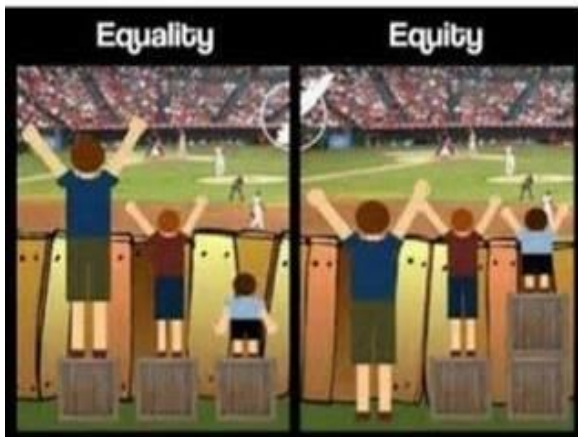
**drink bottle at school.**

**SCHOLASTIC**  
**Book Club LOOP**  
for Parents

LOOP is the Scholastic Book Club  
Linked Online Ordering & Payment platform for parents.  
To order and pay for Scholastic Book Club by credit card visit:  
[www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP](http://www.scholastic.com.au/LOOP)

GET IT ON Google play

Download on the App Store



## PROTECT

Everyone has the right to be safe and be protected from abuse. No one should behave in a way that makes you feel unsafe or afraid, including anyone in your family, anyone at school or anywhere else in the community. Tell a teacher or any adult at your school if you feel unsafe.



Please check your child's hair for any unwelcome visitors. If hair is shoulder length, please be sure to tie it up as a preventative strategy.



### FOUR STEPS TO LICE-FREE LIFE:

**1: INSPECT**  
If you suspect head lice, check.

**2: TREAT**  
Use lice treatment product as directed.

**3: REMOVE**  
Re-insite by combing the hair with the comb provided.

**4: CLEAN**  
Home and personal items.