



WESTLETTER

40/2025 December 18 2025

ARARAT WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL –

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CLASS OF
2025

Last Day of Term 4



Friday December 19
11am Recess

11.45am walk to Gum San

12pm End-of-Term Assembly

1.30pm Early Dismissal



Wishing all our Families a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year

***The school office will re-open
on Tuesday Jan 27, 2026***

***Back-to-School Assessment Days
Jan 28 & 29, 2026***

First day of Term 1 Friday Jan 30, 2026



Ms Knight Writes

Dear AWPS families

Happy last week! I think I have written around 60 newsletters since I have been here – and I am still running late for Kim 😊 Sorry Kim!

A few great things to share, some reminders about 2026, and a big THANKYOU from me to wrap up 2025.

But before that, I want to acknowledge the horrific events of last Sunday that shocked all of us. We haven't touched on this at school – many students will be aware of the events through media at home and on their own devices, and many have no idea anything occurred. We respond supportively and, in an age-appropriate way at school to individual students if things are raised. Events like this make us as adults question so many things – how or why something happens, what could have been done to prevent it, and how this is not the Australia we know and love. There are so many questions. Our thoughts and love go to all the families, responders and communities impacted by the event.

Below is some general advice about how to support young people when tragic events occur – it is a version of information shared by Dr Justin Coulson. It applies both to last Sunday and to many other tragic events that unfortunately are a part of life.

1. Keep your young people away from the television and social media. They do NOT need to see distressing images.
2. Limit your own media consumption. We can't support our children when we as adults are overwhelmed. Check reliable sources for updates, then step away.
3. Be honest, but age appropriate. If kids know something has happened, acknowledge it simply: 'There was a scary incident at Bondi Beach. Police were there quickly, people are in custody, and we are safe.' Don't elaborate unless they ask.
4. Watch for the reaction of kids, not just their words. Anxiety shows up in clinginess, trouble sleeping, and irritability. Keep predictable routines, stay together, and slow down.
5. Model calm, not panic. Our children watch how we respond to frightening news. Show them that even when scary things happen in the world, we can still feel safe in our homes and our communities.
6. Remember – tragic events are rare. They stick in our minds, but they don't happen that often.
7. Focus on the helpers. There are so many incredible people that rise up in emergencies – in fires, accidents, tragedies like Bondi – humans are so wonderful. Focussing on the good can be helpful, while still acknowledging how absolutely horrendous something is.

Seek support if you are worried – Parentline is a great resource, as is Lifeline.

Graduation: The Year 6 Graduation is always a highlight of the year and we had a lovely event last night. Well done to all our graduating students and their families. A special shout out to the Year 5/6 teachers – Miss Paislee, Mrs Fithall, Mr Taylor and Miss Crabtree. You have worked so hard over the year, and we know that is appreciated by our families. Thanks to the scholarship sponsors, and all our school helpers for photos, food, set up and pack up. It is a team effort, but the bulk of the work is done by the Year 5/6 team. We wish our amazing Year 6's all the very best as they head off into different directions. While some relationships will strengthen, others change as students move into secondary school, meet new people, make new friends, and develop new interests. But the strong bonds of primary school always remain, as evidenced by the connections shared during AWPS's 70th anniversary celebrations this year. Good luck Year 6's. We can't wait to see what you achieve in the future.

Last Day: We have the traditional staff versus students cricket match first thing, reports handed out, a tidy, then students will talk to Gum San for the final assembly which starts at 12.00. We will walk back to school and students can be collected from then, with our dismissal time 1.30pm this year. Bus travellers can stay until the bus arrives at 2.10pm. This is slightly earlier than previous years and just gives staff time to do a proper tidy to prepare for the cleaners. We hope to see lots of families at our final assembly.

Start of 2026: The booking link will come out on XUNO for families to book a 'check-in' time for their child/ren for Wednesday 28 and Thursday 29 January next year. All students will start school on Friday January 30.

For your planning, pupil free days are as follows:

Tuesday January 27

March long weekend – Tuesday March 10

Friday May 22

Monday July 13 -First Day Term 3

Monday Nov 2– Day before Melb Cup



THANKYOU: And of course, a huge thankyou from me to the entire AWPS community for your support over the past six terms. I have loved being back in Ararat, where I started my teaching career many years ago. In fact, there were parents of Year 6 graduates last night who were in my Year 6 class when I was a teacher many years ago! It has been a privilege working with the staff, students, and families of AWPS and you will all hold a very special place in my heart as I move off to a new adventure. Canadian Lead Primary School is my ongoing school as Principal, but I am having next year away from being a principal and will be doing a few other roles in education which is exciting. A huge thanks to the AWPS School Council, and Presidents Brett Murphy and Andrew Marx, and to Tianee and Kim in the office, and the amazing Mr Mac in particular who has been an absolute superstar to work alongside.

Have a safe and happy holiday. Enjoy every minute with your children – the days might go slowly sometimes, but the years go fast.

Keep in touch!

Ms Knight 😊



Grade 6 Polo Tops for 2026

Tops for next years Grade 6 students can be ordered from Ararat Mensland.

Child sizes- \$37

Adult size- \$42

**Congratulations to the following students
who received a Positive Behaviour Award
at Assembly ...**



Awards

Vivian– A wonderful year in Foundation. Vivian, you have really started to come out of your shell this semester. You have joined in to all your learning positively and made lots of new friends. Good luck in Grade 1!

Finnley– For working hard to improve his writing. Finnley has been focusing on neat letter formation, spacing his words clearly, and writing complete sentences that include correct boundary punctuation. Well done, Finnley!

Thomas– For consistently demonstrating respectful behaviour towards both peers and teachers. Thomas, you always use kind language, listen thoughtfully and show consideration for others. Your positive attitude helps create a safe and supportive classroom environment. Well done and keep up the fantastic effort!

Mitchell– Aspiring to do your best. Mitchell, you have been eager to learn, hardworking and always keen to help your peers. You always seek feedback to improve your understanding. It has been fantastic to see your growth and confidence build over the last 2 years. Congratulations on an amazing year of learning Mitchell! I am so proud of you.

Jimmy– For demonstrating respect towards all teachers and students consistently during the year. Jimmy, I have been so proud of the growth you achieved this year– both academically and socially. Well done on a great year and good luck for year 7!

Savannah– Excellent behaviour at the Cinema on Friday. Savannah sat quietly, listened carefully, and followed all instructions, showing respect and responsibility throughout the excursion. Well done, Savannah!

Nat– Showing outstanding dedication to your reading this year and for smashing your start-of-year data with truly phenomenal growth. Nat has worked hard every single day at school, and her determination, effort and positive attitude have paid off in a big way. Nat, you should be so proud of everything you’ve achieved! Well done.

Remi– For trying hard to stay focused and sound out all of the sounds in words during our phonics sessions. Remi, it has been great to see you trying to engage fully in our lessons. You have been working hard at sounding out unknown words and applying your spelling knowledge. Keep up the great work. Well done, Remi!

Martial– You are a superstar, and I have loved teaching you over the past two years. You always come in ready to learn and try your best, no matter the task. You seek feedback, and are always looking for your next challenge. You are kind, resilient, respectful and exhibit all our school values. Best of luck in Grade 2, you will smash it!

Hemi– Working hard to improve his reading skills. Hemi has become a more fluent reader whilst also taking his time to work out tricky words. We are also seeing an improvement in Hemi’s ability to concentrate for longer periods and produce work of a higher standard.

Phoebe– Consistently demonstrating a positive attitude and approaching every challenge with determination and effort. Phoebe has been working hard to make improvements wherever possible and continues to show great commitment to her learning. It has been wonderful to see her building new friendships and strengthening her relationships with her peers. Fantastic work, Phoebe.



Aspiring Respectful Resilient

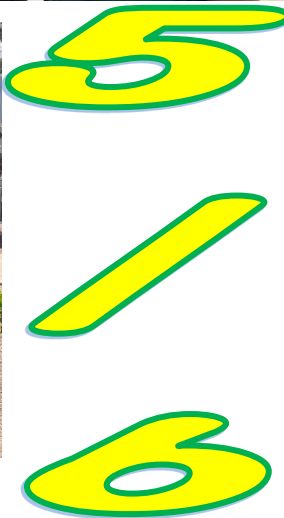


Positive Behaviour Awards



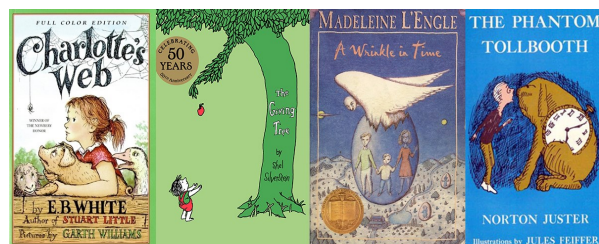
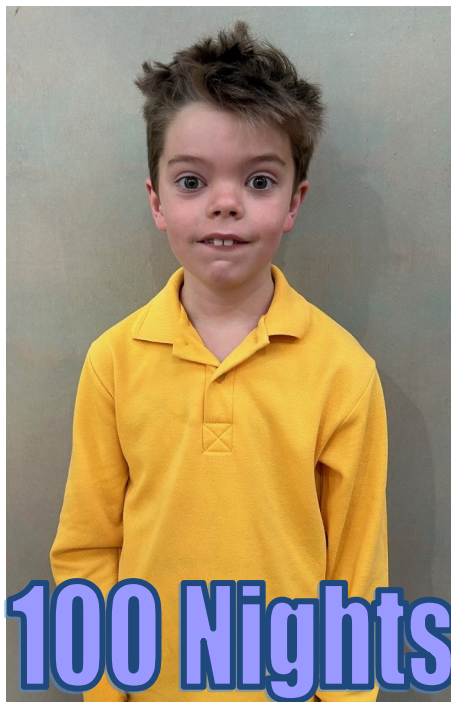
Grade 5 / 6







GRADE 5/6



Reading

Awards





Blue Spelling Group



Blue Spelling Group had their last lesson on Wednesday. These students have worked so hard for Ms Knight all year!



Live the outdoors with your friends and family these school holidays in the Grampians!

Join us for an adventure in Halls Gap!

1. Hang out on the rock with rock climbing and abseiling
2. Enjoy adventure in the lake with a canoe session
3. Challenge yourself on our high ropes course
4. Have fun outdoors reaching your targets at archery
5. Gather around the fire for bush cooking (seasonal)

LEARN TO SWIM

VICSWIM Summer Kidz Program is a great way for your child to **learn how to swim & stay safe** in & around water!

vicswim.com.au

SCAN TO BOOK
YOUR PLACE

ENROL FOR SUMMER

\$43

FOR 5 LESSONS!

*An additional entry cost may apply at some pools.

Dates for the Diary



Friday Dec 19	Last Day of Term 4
Monday Jan 26	Australia Day Public Holiday
Tuesday Jan 27	School Office will reopen
Tuesday Jan 27	Staff first day back
Jan 28 & 29	Student Assessment Days
Friday Jan 30	First Day of Term 1 2026
Monday Feb 9	3-6 Swimming Trials
Friday Feb 20	3-6 Swimming Sports
Thursday April 2	Last day of Term 1

CHANGES TO STUDENT DETAILS

Please notify the office and obtain a 'Changes to Student Details' form for any of the following reasons:

• Change of address	• Change of emergency details/contacts
• Change of occupation	• Medical alert information
• Change of telephone numbers	• Change of email address

These changes are vital to keep your child/ren's details up-to-date in case of an emergency. Please note - changes can also be made on Xuno.

Note:- Please remember that when you come into the school for any reason you must come via the Front Office and sign in at the Ipad. Please also use the Ipad to sign your children out when collecting them early. This is for safety reasons and must be adhered to.
Thank you.



Ararat West PS is committed to child safety (Ministerial Order No. 1359) and takes all reasonable steps to ensure that the safety of our students is paramount.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/protect>



Mission Statement



Developing in our children an interest in learning and a desire to be their best; utilising their skills and attitudes to enable them to reach their full potential in society.