

PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

Edition 1- Term 1 2026

Vision

There is a prosperous path for every child. Each journey is theirs to lead. There is a place in which every child can shine.

Mission

Identify the talent, develop the confidence and create the leader.



We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we are gathered here today and we pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging for they hold the memories, the culture and dreams of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

From the Principal Genevieve Casonato

The 2026 school year has commenced with vigour and enthusiasm. It seems like only yesterday that students enjoyed their first day reconnecting with classmates, settling into their new learning spaces and getting to know their teachers. Mrs Bach and I also enjoyed visiting classrooms and listening to students share their holiday adventures. Since that first day, five weeks have passed by with our gorgeous new Preps settling in beautifully.

Over the summer holidays, the wonderful Parktone staff generously gave their personal time to ensure classroom spaces were well prepared and inviting. Tables have been reconfigured so that students are forward-facing during explicit teaching, while also allowing teachers to move freely around the room to support learning. Each classroom continues to include a U-shaped table to facilitate small-group and strategy-based learning sessions. If you were unable to attend the Meet and Greet a few weeks ago, I encourage you to make some time to pop into your child's learning space.

Something I am finding incredibly rewarding is seeing students dressed in the correct uniform, walking through the gates with beaming smiles, ready to embrace the day ahead. Recently, our Year 6 children received theirs and are wearing them proudly.

This year, we will continue to focus on maintaining the Parktone uniform policy, including wearing the correct school-coloured socks (plain white or black), refraining from nail polish and ensuring all headwear is in Parktone school colours. We want our students to look their very best at school and when representing Parktone in the wider community.

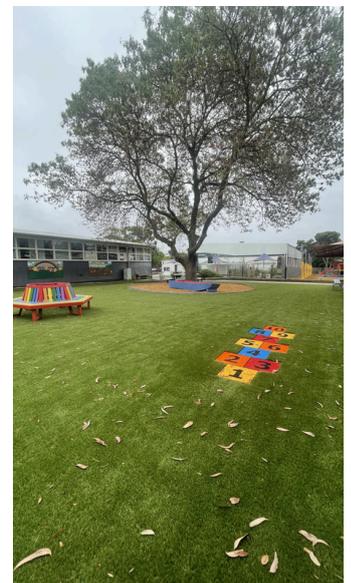
Beautification works

While the summer holidays were underway, several projects were completed to prepare our outdoor spaces for the return of students. Last year, we constructed garden beds around the P-2 playground; however, the Friendship Area required significant care and attention. To create another space for students to connect, we redesigned this area to provide a place where they could relax, socialise or engage in quieter outdoor play.

Artificial turf was laid to replace the tanbark and bare soil. The exposed roots of our beautiful friendship trees were carefully cordoned off with tanbark, and additional seating and a boat installed for all to enjoy. To further encourage quieter play, a chessboard, hopscotch and a snake game were embedded into the grassed area.

Our wonderful maintenance team member, Nick, supervised the works while also preparing other areas of the school grounds, including repainting the four-square courts, which have already been a huge hit with students. We are now eagerly awaiting the installation of the Gaga pit, scheduled for late February or early March.

The beautification works completed over the break have only been possible due to past parent fundraising, as well as funds to be raised this year. The Friendship Garden project cost \$72,000 and has already proven to be a valuable investment, as seen in the way families enjoyed the space at the Welcome Picnic and continue to connect there at drop-off and pick-up times.



 Don't forget to follow us on Instagram!

PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

From the Principal continued...

New Website

Designing a new website has been a significant project undertaken by the leadership team, with Dave Harrison guiding the process.

In April last year, we began by thinking about what makes Parktone special and unique. We wanted a multi-pronged approach to update our image. It was a team effort with a number of different staff and parents assisting us. It includes a short film showcasing our special qualities. This film was made by a former parent who has been a great support to us in this process.

Once this was completed, filming began. While we initially thought this would mark the end of the process, many additional hours were spent editing and refining the content to ensure it truly captured the essence of Parktone.

The website will be ready to launch in the next few weeks, and I encourage you to take the time to explore the final version, which celebrates the many wonderful attributes of Parktone Primary School.



Our Curriculum

We create a welcoming and supportive environment where students develop academically, socially, and creatively. Our curriculum builds strong foundations in mathematics and literacy while offering engaging STEAM, sports, performing arts, and Physical Education programs.

Our well-rounded programs follow the Victorian Curriculum F-10, focusing on academic achievement and personal growth. We provide students with the knowledge and skills they need for lifelong learning, strong social connections, and active participation in the community.



School Review

In Term 4 this year, we will be conducting our School Review. Due to our school's strong performance and size, and in consultation with the region, we have been allocated only one day for this review. This reflects that Parktone is a high-performing school with a solid foundation of teaching and learning processes, ensuring all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

All schools are required to participate in a School Review every four years. The process informs the development of the school's four-year Strategic Plan. The reviewer also assesses compliance with the Curriculum and Student Learning Minimum Standards, which includes the Child Safe Standards required for school registration.

We have already begun preparing for this one-day review by ensuring policies are up to date and key documents demonstrate compliance. School Council will play a pivotal role in supporting this work.

Camp Program

In the coming weeks (23rd–27th March), Pippa and I are looking forward to attending the Year 6 camp at Woorabinda. This camp is always a highlight of the year for our Year 6 students, and staff are excited to be part of it. On the final day, students take part in a camp challenge, with the winning team returning to school proudly holding the rustic Woorabinda trophy. Bring on the challenge!

The dates of the other camps are as follows:

Year 5 Camp–Coonawarra

Tuesday 19th May to Friday 22nd May

Year 4 Camp–Philip Island

Monday 17th August to Wednesday 19th August

Year 3 Camp– Sleepover

Friday 6th November

Next week, I will be exploring the possibility of relaunching the Japan Tour. We will be meeting with schools that have undertaken international travel since COVID, as there are now many new procedures to navigate. We are currently looking at scheduling the Japanese tour for March–April 2027. Stay tuned for further updates on the feasibility of providing this exciting experience for our Parktone students.

School Council Elections

This week, each parent received ballot papers to elect our School Councillors for 2026. There are five vacancies to be filled, as some ongoing councillors have reached the end of their two-year term. We have been very fortunate that seven parents have expressed an interest in joining the School Council. I look forward to announcing the successful nominees to the school community on this week.

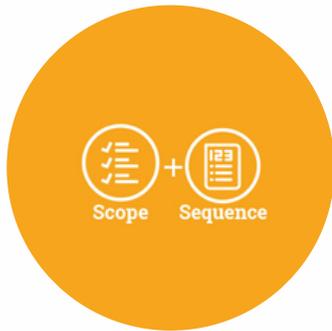
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Teaching and Learning

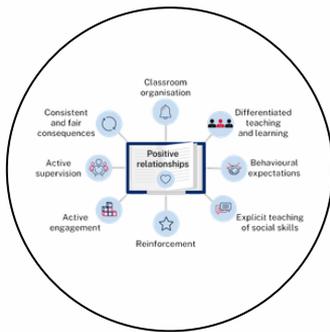
Mel Bach – Assistant Principal

It has been a great start to the year, and in this newsletter edition I am excited to share some of the key priorities guiding our work in 2026 through our Annual Implementation Plan (AIP). These focus areas reflect both our school goals and a mandated broader system priority.

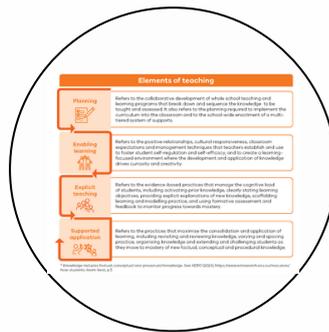
BIG ROCKS



Mathematics



Improving management of Behaviour



VTLM 2.0 Enabling Learning



Reading - Fluency

System-wide Priority – NAPLAN Growth in Reading and Numeracy

A key system priority this year is reducing the number of students achieving in the "Needs Additional Support" category in NAPLAN Reading and Numeracy.

We are responding to this by:

- using assessment data strategically to identify learning needs early
- providing targeted teaching and intervention
- strengthening core classroom instruction – one of these methods is the Number Fluency Program
- monitoring progress closely throughout the year

Our focus is not simply on test results, but on ensuring every student builds the knowledge and skills they need for long-term success. This has always been of great importance to us at Parktone.

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Strengthening Reading Fluency

A major focus this year is improving reading fluency across the school. Fluency is more than just reading quickly – it involves accuracy, expression and understanding. When students read fluently, they are better able to focus on meaning and comprehension. We look forward to sharing our progress with you in this important area as the year continues.

F - 6 READING: BEYOND PHONICS FOCUS ON FLUENCY



- Routines to support the development of reading fluency from Foundation to Year 6

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Fluency is...
“the ability to read accurately, quickly, expressively, with good phrasing AND with good comprehension”

PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

Teaching and Learning

Mel Bach – Assistant Principal

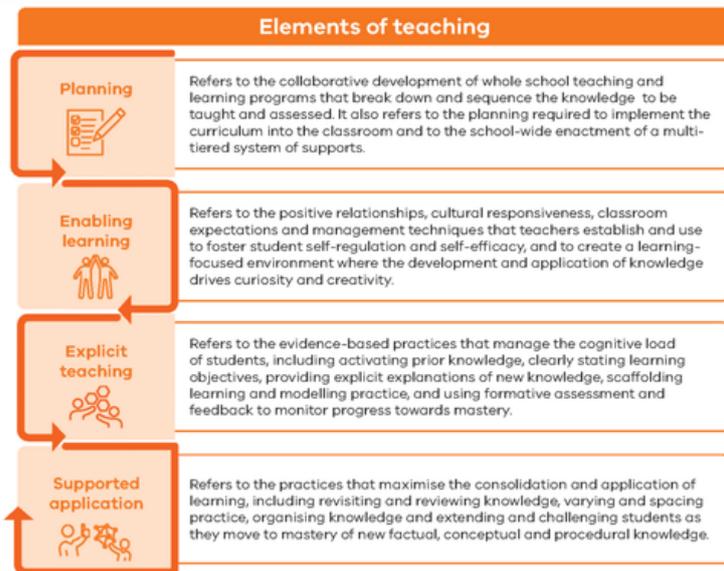
Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0 – Strengthening the Elements of Teaching with a focus on Enabling Learning

This year we are deepening our understanding and implementation of the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model 2.0, with particular attention to the element of Enabling Learning.

This includes:

- Establishing orderly, supportive classroom environments
- Building strong teacher–student relationships
- Creating clear routines and expectations
- Using feedback effectively
- Ensuring all students feel safe, challenged and supported

We know that when classrooms are calm, structured and inclusive, students are better able to engage deeply with their learning.



* Knowledge includes factual, conceptual and procedural knowledge. See AERO (2023), <https://www.edresearch.edu.au/resources/how-students-learn-best>, p.5

- We ensure every student is known, valued and supported to learn.
- We identify and remove barriers through timely, targeted support.
- We explicitly teach the learning behaviours and strategies students need to be independent.
- We maintain high expectations and scaffold learning so all students can achieve.

Mathematics – Consistent Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) F–6

In Mathematics, we are working to ensure a consistent Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum (GVC) from Foundation to Year 6. This means:

- clear alignment of content across year levels
- consistent instructional approaches
- agreed essential learnings at each level
- strong connections between number fluency, problem-solving and reasoning

Consistency across classrooms ensures that students build knowledge progressively and confidently as they move through the school.

Positive Classroom Management Strategies

Aligned with the Enabling Learning focus, we are continuing to strengthen teacher management of behaviour through consistent Positive Classroom Management Strategies.

Staff will be refining practices such as:

- Active Supervision
- Explicit teaching of expected behaviours
- Consistent responses to inappropriate behaviour
- Proactive classroom routines

This work supports our goal of providing every student with a safe, predictable and respectful learning environment.

We are genuinely excited about the clarity and alignment of this year's priorities. Each focus area is interconnected – strong reading instruction, high-quality mathematics curriculum, effective classroom management, and a shared instructional model which all work together to maximise student growth.

We are looking forward to a wonderful 2026 school year!
Kind regards,

Melanie Bach

PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

Maths at Parktone – A Strong Start to 2026

Brett Sargeant – Learning Specialist

The year has begun with some wonderful Maths lessons across the school. At Parktone, students engage in 300 minutes of Mathematics each week, ensuring that numeracy is given the time and attention it deserves.

Our learning activities are carefully designed to meet the needs of all learners. In classrooms, you may hear students talking about “Mild, Spicy and Hot” tasks. These provide different entry points into the same concept, allowing every child to begin at a level that supports them while still offering appropriate challenge. This approach helps students build confidence, take risks and embrace challenge in a supportive environment.

Our Maths Fluency Program

A key part of our Mathematics program is our daily Maths Fluency session, which runs after recess for 10–15 minutes.

What is maths fluency?

Maths fluency means being able to recall number facts and complete basic calculations accurately and efficiently. When students know their number facts well, they don't have to use all their thinking power on simple steps – which allows them to focus on deeper problem-solving and reasoning.

Why is it important?

Strong fluency:

- Builds confidence
- Reduces maths anxiety
- Supports success in more complex topics like fractions, multiplication, division and problem solving
- Strengthens overall numeracy skills for life

These short, focused daily sessions help students master one skill at a time and track their own progress. The consistency of daily practice makes a significant difference over time.

Extending High Achievers – Bebras Challenge

Students who have successfully completed Maths Fluency Level 6 move on to extension opportunities, including the Bebras Challenge.

Bebras is a fun and engaging computational thinking challenge for students in Years 3–12. It is an international challenge involving over 2.9 million students from 60 countries.

Importantly, coding skills are not required. Bebras focuses on logical thinking, problem solving and pattern recognition – skills that complement and extend our Mathematics program.

At Parktone, our goal is to ensure every student builds strong foundations in number while also having opportunities to challenge themselves and think deeply. We look forward to another exciting year of growth in Mathematics.



BEBRAS COMPUTATIONAL THINKING CHALLENGE

PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

Literacy, Leader In Me & SWPBS Update

Amy Sharman – Learning Specialist

The Importance of Goals

Did you know that writing down a goal makes it more likely to happen? And when you break a big goal into smaller steps and keep track of your progress, it is easier to reach it!

At school, your student is learning how to set goals for learning and for life. They write their goals in their Leadership Portfolio. Ask your student to share their goals with you, they will love talking about something that matters to them! Listen closely and ask questions before giving advice. That's practicing and modeling Habit 5: *Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood*®.

Your student might tell you about their WIG. That's short for *Wildly Important Goal*! It is part of *The 4 Disciplines of Execution*® (4DX®)—the way our school helps students choose and reach their goals. Ask your student what their WIG is and how they are working on it. You can help by posting their goal at home and cheering them on.

You can set a goal as a family, too! Pick something simple, like reading together, having family dinners, using screens less, or planning a fun activity. Write it down, break it into steps, and track how you are doing. Celebrate each small win!



When students set and reach goals, they build confidence and learn they can do hard things. Let's help our children dream big and take action!

Celebrating our SWPBS Success

We are proud to share that in 2025 our school achieved Bronze Accreditation in School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS), following our Blue Accreditation in 2024. This recognition reflects our strong and consistent school-wide expectations that help to create a calm, orderly and positive environment both inside and outside the classroom.

The term has commenced with explicit teaching and modelling of our expectations through student-led videos, circle time discussions and short follow-up tasks. For many students, these are important refreshers and reminders, while for our new students they provide essential learning about how we do things at our school. We place strong emphasis on modelling expected behaviours, not just talking about them. Explicit teaching about our expectations will continue throughout the year to reinforce positive habits and a shared understanding.

Our students and staff are to be congratulated for their commitment to living our shared values each day. We will continue to focus on proactive approaches to maintaining these high standards as we work towards achieving Silver Accreditation in 2026.

Literacy at Parktone

At Parktone, we strive to develop a genuine love of writing and strong engagement in literacy. We are excited to share a wonderful enrichment opportunity for our Year 3–6 writers through PETAA's Young Writer's Program. In March, we will welcome award-winning Australian author Claire Saxby to work with selected students in 2 dedicated workshops. This program connects schools with published authors to nurture advanced writing skills and inspire a deep love of storytelling. We look forward to seeing our young writers challenged, inspired and empowered through this special experience!

This year we will continue our work with Literacy Consultant Mardi Gorman. In March, she will work alongside our teachers to further strengthen classroom practice in phonics and spelling instruction. As part of this continued partnership, Mardi will support our staff to strengthen their understanding of reading fluency and how it can be embedded into daily classroom routines. Strong evidence shows that reading fluency is closely linked to comprehension, as it allows students to focus their thinking on understanding the text rather than decoding individual words. This focus will further enhance our whole-school approach to building confident, capable readers.



PARKTONE NEWSLETTER

Parktone Teddy Bears Picnic

Our Prep students were joined by their Year 3 buddies for a Prep Teddy Bears' Picnic, which was a fun and enjoyable event for everyone involved.

The children brought along their favourite teddy or soft toy as well as some extra special treats in their lunchboxes to share with their cuddly friends— from teddy bear biscuits to honey sandwiches – all the delicious things a bear might enjoy! 😊

They carefully chose teddies that were happy to stay overnight, as they took part in a very special Teddy Bear Sleepover. The teddies returned home with the children on Friday after school, well rested and (of course) very well behaved! 😊



Parktone Alumni News



Music Captain



2026 Photography Captain

Congratulations to our Parktone Alumni, Matilda and Harry (Class of 2020) on their fantastic achievement of being appointed College Captains at Parkdale Secondary in Music and Photography.

We also congratulate Ava and Jeana (Class of 2021) appointed House Leaders.

We are incredibly proud of your dedication, creativity, and leadership, and it is wonderful to see your talents recognised in these special roles. Well done!