



**2025**

**Parent  
Information  
Handbook**



# Donald Primary School

Walker St, Donald, VIC 3480

☎ 54 971 581

✉ donald.ps@education.vic.gov.au

🖱 [www.donaldps.vic.edu.au](http://www.donaldps.vic.edu.au)

## School Hours

Start of school	8.55am
Recess	11.00am
Lunch	1.00pm (seated eating time) 1.10pm Outside Play Time
Dismissed	3.20pm

## Term Dates 2025

<b>Term 1</b>	Tuesday January 28th (Staff) Wednesday 29th (Students) - Friday April 4th
<b>Term 2</b>	Tuesday 22nd April - Friday 4th July
<b>Term 3</b>	Monday 21st July - Friday 19th September
<b>Term 4</b>	Monday 6th October Friday 19th December

## Welcome

At Donald Primary School our aim is to develop the needs of the whole child, academically, socially, emotionally and physically with a strong emphasis on student well-being. The following underpin our personal development values to ensure healthy progress of every child is made and each child has the knowledge, skills and resiliency to be successful in a rapidly changing world.

- Encouraging, recognising, celebrating and rewarding achievement.
- Treating children as individuals and building on their strengths and developing their weaknesses.
- Providing high quality, innovative teaching and learning opportunities.
- Valuing our staff and encouraging their professional development.
- Maintaining the highest ethical standards and treating everyone fairly and equitably.
- Striving for continuous improvement and promoting innovation.
- Offering a diverse range of school programs and extra curricula activities.
- Emphasising children being engaged and having fun in an organised, quality learning environment.

### Gavin Young

#### Principal



# Donald Primary School Staff

**Principal**

Mr Gavin Young

**Business Manager**

Mrs Georgie Dixon

**Administration**

Mrs Kylie Geddes

## 2024 Teaching Roles

### Homeroom Teachers

Prep/ Grade 1 Miss Teagan Anderson

Grade 1/2 Miss Brooke Thompson

Grade 3/4 Mr Paul Matters

Grade 5/6 Mrs Jess Nunn

Leading Teacher Miss Xanthi Campbell

### Specialist Subjects and Support

Art Mrs Jenny Goldsmith

Technology Ms Lianna Askraba

PE & Health Mrs Lauren Hawkes

Science Mrs Lauren Hawkes

Tutoring Mrs Allison Cashin

Library Mrs Dee Green

Classroom Support Mrs Dee Green Mrs Robyn Sheridan

Mrs Kylie Geddes Mrs Sara Adams

Ms Rhiannon Crane

## Wellbeing Support

Occupational Therapist Annabel Melino

Chaplain Mrs Jaqi Douglass

Speech Pathologist Aleshia Petrie

# DPS Values

## The A B C D & E of Donald Primary School

A is for ATTITUDE

B is for BOUNCING BACK

C is for COMMUNICATION

D is for DECISIONS

E is for EMPATHY

## FOCUS

- RESPECT - *Self Awareness* - For others, ourselves, the environment and school resources.
- MUTUAL RESPECT - *For Everybody* – We will treat people the way we want to be treated.
- HAVE A RED HOT GO - *Personal Best* – It's important that we do everything to the best of our ability.
- ATTENTIVE LISTENING - *Stop, look & listen* – We will listen with our eyes, ears and hearts.
- 'HERE TO LEARN'- *It's a privilege* – We have the right to participate and we know the more we participate the more we gain.
- RESPONSIBILITY – *For my own learning* - I am in control of my own actions and the way in which I behave and learn.
- NO PUT DOWNS - *NAME IT!* – We will speak kindly to others and think of other people's feelings.

## TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTERS

The use of computers & iPads across the curriculum is an essential part of the learning experience at Donald Primary School.

Students in years 1 – 6 have a designated netbook computer or Chromebook for use at school and students in Prep have access to iPads. Students have immediate access to the Internet. We have a security process in place to protect students from inappropriate access.

Each classroom has a smart TV for general whole class use.

Donald Primary School is using Google Classrooms to facilitate student learning. This program allows students to access lessons through their classroom and teaches them a variety to skills across a range of programs.

## PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY (PSD)

If any students enrol with specific needs an application can be made for funding to help the child while they are at school. This is a very formal process and can take months for a result to occur. Any enquiries should be directed to the principal.

## LITERACY SUPPORT

Literacy Intervention Support Program (LISP) is a one-to-one early intervention program, which provides an opportunity for students who have not yet established effective reading and writing processes. It is assessed on a needs basis. Several staff run a program where students receive a daily 30-minute lesson in addition to the regular classroom reading and writing program. The Literacy Support program continues until children have developed strategies that will allow them to participate effectively in the reading and writing programs in their classrooms.

## STUDENT SHARED SUPPORT PLANS

Some students may be identified as requiring an individual Shared Student Support Plan (SSSP). The purpose of this plan is to have a positive impact on the learning progress of identified students who may require additional assistance. It is an important way to provide a logical and more beneficial ‘wrap around’ service for your child, ensuring the school staff, family unit and support service providers work cooperatively together. The SSSP is a working document which is referred to and built upon throughout the year.

## LIBRARY

We have a large, well-stocked, and computerised library with over 5,000 books. A Book Fair is run each year to enable our library to choose the latest range of educational literature. Children should bring a library bag on borrowing days to help protect and preserve our library books.

A wide range of non-fiction and fiction books are available for children to take home each night. They enjoy this time and participate eagerly. Children are encouraged to read each night at home, as this strengthens the home-school partnership, and is a way of working together to support literacy learning. Children, no matter what age, love to be read to – try to share a story/newspaper article with your child each day.

## READING LOG BOOK/DIARY

The reading log book/diary is used as both a means of communication between home and school and a way in which we monitor student's reading. A wide range of non-fiction and fiction books are available for children to take home each night. They enjoy this time and participate eagerly. Children are encouraged to read each night at home, as this strengthens the home-school partnership and is a way of working together to support literacy learning. Children, no matter what age, love to be read to – share a story/newspaper article with your child.

## NAPLAN

Donald Primary School prides itself on maintaining the majority of our domains at around or above State means. NAPLAN testing is undertaken each year for Grade 3 & 5 students.

## SOUNDWRITE

For some years now Donald Primary School has been implementing this highly structured, systematic synthetic phonics program throughout the school.

This program is successful in **teaching children to read and spell** because it starts with what all children know from a very young age – the sounds of our spoken language. Then, using a very systematic approach, it teaches them how these sounds are coded within our writing system.

## CAMPS, EXCURSIONS & VISITING PERFORMERS

We have a very progressive and educational P-6 camping and excursion program which caters for differing maturity and allows for personal growth.

### Camps Examples - subject to change

<b>Prep Gr 1 &amp; 2</b>	Day Excursion followed by games, a BBQ and a disco.
<b>Grade 2</b>	Sleepover after above disco.
<b>Grades 3 &amp; 4</b>	2 nights, 3 day trip to Ballarat – alternating each year with camp at another location
<b>Grades 5 &amp; 6</b>	4 – 5 Day Camp to a major City one year & alternate location the next.

### Visiting Performances:

All grades attend a variety of visiting performances each year. Costs for performances are included in school fees under the Cultural & Travel Levy.



### CSEF - Camps, Sports & Excursions Fund

If you hold a valid means-tested concession card or are a temporary foster parent, you may be eligible for CSEF. Application forms are available at the school office at the start of the year.

### SPORTS

Our comprehensive sporting program includes House and Inter-School competition, encouraging broad participation as well as individual performance. We boast our own swimming, athletics, cross country and winter sports House programs. Students also participate in North Central Events and sporting competitions against neighbouring Schools throughout the year.

An intensive swimming program is run at the beginning of every year. A number of lunchtime and extra sporting challenges are also held throughout the year.

### SWIMMING PROGRAM

Donald Primary School operates its swimming program at the local swimming pool with trained Auswim teachers in attendance. The swimming sports are held at the end of this program.



## XUNO

Our main method of communication is the XUNO app. Each parent is able to access this app, you will receive email details once your child is enrolled. Download the app from appropriate app store and enter the details in the email. Contact the school if you have any issues.



Messages and reminders will regularly be sent out about upcoming events and important information. Each week the newsletter will also be published here.

Importantly we use XUNO to track our student attendance & Bus travel arrangements, if your child is absent or unwell or will be changing their travel arrangements please use XUNO to update the school.

## NEWSLETTER

Each fortnight we publish our Buloke Express Newsletter.

This will have information about upcoming events and celebrates the achievements and efforts of our students.

The newsletter will also be published on XUNO.



## FACEBOOK

The Donald Primary School has a closed Facebook Group that we use to share information about what is happening at school. This Facebook can only be accessed by current parents /guardians and staff. If you would like to join this group please contact the school.

## OFFICE

Our Business Manager and Administration staff are available to help with an queries.

You can visit them in the office or contact them via phone, Xuno or Email.

Phone : 54 971 581

Email : donald.ps@education.vic.gov.au

For any information you can also visit the DPS website [www.donaldps.vic.edu.au](http://www.donaldps.vic.edu.au)



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Donald Primary School are passionate about ensuring our students have the supports they need to excel in and out of the classroom. We have part time Occupational Therapist, School Chaplain and Speech Pathologist who work alongside our teaching staff to support the individual needs of students.

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

### ROLE OF AN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST IN A SCHOOL SETTING

Support the development of skills in the following areas:

**Fine Motor:** using scissors, holding a pencil, tying shoe laces, opening lunch box & containers, using our eyes to smoothly track or copy from the board

**Gross motor:** hold body upright to maintain a seated position at the table or on the floor, jump, hop, skip, climb, kick & catch a ball

**Emotional regulation:** regulate emotions to reduce big outbursts (e.g. anger, frustration, sadness), regulate body to help children concentrate & sustain attention to a task

**Postural control:** strengthen our postural control. Proximal stability for distal mobility

## CHAPLAIN/WELFARE ROLE

Through Korus Connect we employ a chaplain/welfare person who provides social/emotional and wellbeing support to both individual students and small groups. This person also assists with constructing our Avocados/wellbeing classes which educate our students about our school values.

## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

A large number of student support services are available for all parents to access from the Education Department based in Horsham. The Student Support Services Team is made up of Psychologists, Speech Pathologists, Social Workers, Counsellors, and Visiting Teachers. Their role is to assist schools to identify and support children with social, emotional, speech, language, and learning needs. They can offer assistance in:

- Assessment
- Therapy
- Counselling
- Individual / Group Programs
- Resourcing School
- Liaising with other services
- Workshops / Professional Development
- Consulting with Teachers and Parents
- Secondary consultation
- Advocacy
- Student Wellbeing Chaplain

## ASTHMA & ALLERGIES

An Asthma &/or Allergy Plan must be completed for all students with either condition. Please make office and classroom staff aware of any allergies or triggers for asthma.

## HEAD LICE

From time to time we have outbreaks of head lice at school. Please notify the Principal if you find any sign of head lice in children's hair. A general warning will be placed in the Newsletter – without naming anyone of course! Trained Parents or school staff will inspect children's hair on a regular basis at school. A permission form to inspect the children's hair is signed on enrolment. Following inspections at school a note will be sent home to let parents know if head lice were detected or not – all children take home a note following inspections. The note will let parents know that their child/ren have head lice &/or eggs and that they need to be treated prior to the child returning to school or the note will simply notify parents that their child/children's hair has been inspected. Once treated the children may return to school. *Students MUST be excluded from the school until treatment has occurred.*

## MEDICATION / MEDICAL NEEDS

***If a child is to receive medication during school hours, a Medication Authority Form signed by the parent, clearly detailing dosages and times must accompany the medication. Under no circumstances will staff dispense medication to children unless the parent has consented in writing.***

Prescription medication must be in the child's name and in the original packaging with prescription label attached. Please discuss all medications with your teacher. Only 2 members of school staff will control the dispensing of medication. All medication will be kept in the staffroom.

For specialised medical needs our staff undertake additional training to support the management of health needs.



## ABSENCES

'It's Not OK To Be Away' - Families are asked to contact the school prior to 9.00am if your child is absent. Alternatively, a message can be sent via the XUNO Family app first thing in the morning. If a student is absent on a particular day and the school has not been previously notified by a parent, or the absence is otherwise unexplained, Donald Primary School will contact parents via SMS expecting a response. If the absence is known prior to the day, a preliminary XUNO message or phone call is appreciated. Where planned absences are of a substantial time, work is able to be organised for the student.

**If a student needs to be taken out of school for any reason, the teacher is to be notified and the details must be entered in the XUNO Kiosk at the Front Office.**

**Students must not attend school before 8.30am.**

## ACCIDENTS & FIRST AID

At least two staff members with Level 2 First Aid training are always on duty at the school. First Aid treatment given to a student will be recorded on a First Aid Form and given to the student to hand to parents, detailing what has occurred and why. If any doubt exists in an injury the parents or emergency contacts will be contacted. In the event of a serious injury an ambulance will be called.

## ASSEMBLIES

Assemblies are held weekly, on Friday at 9.00 a.m. Visitors are most welcome to attend.

Assemblies are conducted with the assistance of the Grade 6 students, providing them with practice in organising and addressing a crowd, and usually include:

- Singing of the National Anthem
- Acknowledgement of country
- Star of the Week Awards and Special Awards – Art, Science, ICT  
Principal, 'Golden Bull', Lexia Reading certificates
- Birthdays, House points
- Special announcements, items of news, school values can be reinforced and promoted.

## AVOCADOS / BUDDIES

Avocados is a peer support and learning program where a staff member (different from their usual teacher) and a group of students learn about our values, inclusion and celebrate diversity. These classes are held every week. The child's 'Big Avocado' then becomes a significant other for them if they are in trouble or want to talk to someone else. Everyone becoming an Avocado is a way to foster a more caring and friendly environment at our school.

## BICYCLES & SCOOTERS

- Bicycles and Scooters are to be parked on the racks at the bike shelter.
- Bicycles and Scooters must not be ridden in the school grounds or in Waddell Street.
- Children must walk their bikes/scooters across Waddell Street & on footpaths surrounding the school at all times.
- Parents are asked to remind their children constantly about road safety on bikes/scooters.
- It is not advisable to allow very young children to come to school on bikes or scooters.
- Students **MUST** wear a helmet when riding a bike or scooter.

## BOOK CLUB

Scholastic Australia Book Club catalogues are handed out to students on a regular basis. Students return their book orders to their classroom teachers if you wish to purchase books. Every order put in by students results in “reward points” for the school to use to purchase more resources for the library. A “Book Fair” is held once or twice a year at school – this gives parents an opportunity to purchase books with the same rewards for the school.

## BRAIN FOOD

At 10am each day there is a 5 minute gap where students are encouraged to have some brain food to eat. This must be a raw food (fruit, dried fruit or vegies) with no packaging. This is not a replacement for play lunch but studies have shown that this helps your child think and work better and develops healthy eating habits. Food should be prepared ready to eat with minimal mess and fuss.

## BUS TRAVELLERS

If your child is a bus traveller and is not travelling on the bus for any reason, **a note must be sent from home** and given to the classroom teacher or a message submitted via the Xuno App. If your child has a school friend travelling with them on their bus who doesn't usually travel on that bus, then both the High School and Primary School must be contacted, stating the student's name and on which bus they are travelling. The Donald High School has the final say on all bus issues, as they are the co-ordinating School.

## CASH

Money sent to school with students for fees, camps, book club, etc. should be placed in a clearly marked envelope stating child's name, amount and what the money is for. This should be given to the classroom teacher as soon as possible or can be dropped off at the front office.

## CELEBRATIONS

Annually we hold a family fun night, prep circus, end of year concert and a grade six graduation ceremony to celebrate our students and showcase their amazing work throughout the year. Families, carers and the community are invited to celebrate where appropriate.



## CHILD SAFETY

Donald Primary School is committed to zero tolerance of child abuse. All staff and members of the DPS community have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children. Our Child Safety Policy can be found on our website.

## DRINKS

Students are permitted to have **non-spill bottles of water** with them throughout the day in their classroom. If they become a distraction, they are removed from students.

## HOUSE TEAMS

Each year all students are placed into a school house. Every week all Houses can receive House Points which are collected and go towards the Meyer House Trophy.

Family groups are usually grouped together.

Our school houses are:

BULOKE –GREEN

AVON-BLUE

BATYO –YELLOW

RICHARDSON –RED



## HOMEWORK

The following is a guide as to the amount of time that might be given to reading as a minimum amount. Other work is occasionally handed out if students fall behind during class. We do not believe in handing out excessive amounts of extra school work as “kids need time to be kids.” Grade 5 & 6 are the only exception for homework – in preparation for High School.

**Year level Time per night** (over 4 nights)

Prep, 1 & 2 minimum 5 - 10 minutes per night

Years 3 - 6 minimum 10 - 15 minutes per night

## STUDENT VOICE

Representatives from years 1-6 are elected at the beginning of each year. They organise various events during the year like casual clothes days and other charity fundraisers.



## LEADERSHIP

Annual elections are held for Grade 6 children for the role of School and House leaders. All grade 6 students receive a leadership position during their final year of primary schooling. A presentation is held at the beginning of each year.

## LUNCH ORDERS

Lunch orders are provided by Spuds Cafe on FRIDAY each week – a price list is available from the front office. Lunch orders are not available on days when special activities are held at school.

Lunch order envelopes need to be:

- Well sealed
- Clearly labelled with the child’s name and class
- Correct money enclosed
- Order clearly stated
- Students need to remember to put their orders in the lunch order box - situated in the corridor near the Office.

## LUNCH

Students are supervised for the first ten minutes of this break while they eat their lunch. On wet days or days of excessive heat, children will stay inside and participate in organised activities such as board games and construction. If children forget to bring their lunch to school parents may be contacted and if available a sandwich may be made for the child.

## MARC VAN

Donald Primary School receives fortnightly visit from the Department of Education & Training mobile library. The Mobile Area Resource Centre (MARC van) is a small mobile library.

## PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS AND REPORTS

Arrangements will be made during the year to give parents an opportunity to discuss with the class teacher their child's progress in an interview situation.

Parent-Teacher Interviews are held once per semester throughout the year, and others can be organised with classroom teachers if required.

Formal school reports mandated by the Department of Education & Training are sent to parents twice a year in June and December.

## POLICIES

To view up to date policies and documents that affect DPS you can view them at [www.donaldps.vic.edu.au](http://www.donaldps.vic.edu.au)

## RECOGNITION

We like to recognise the amazing effort and achievements of our students. Throughout the school year students may receive House Points, Star of the Week or Golden Bull awards. These are given out for those giving their schooling a red hot go, are highlighting the school values and other achievements.

## SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS

Annually, families are given the opportunity to support our school financially. The voluntary contribution program covers stationary, classroom needs, educational programs Reading Log Books, etc. for the entire year. Unlike a majority of schools, our parents do not have to supply any other materials.

At the beginning of each year parents are given the opportunity to pay for Visiting Shows and Performers, Excursions, Buses, Swimming & Athletic Events, Special Craft Activities, Theme Days, Special Treat Days and Activities by paying an upfront Travel and Cultural Levy per student.

Parents are also asked to contribute a one-off family fee towards the upkeep of the School gardens.

There is no mandatory payment for your child to attend Donald Primary School.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

The DPS School Council ensures the parents and members of the community have the ability to participate in discussions and decisions that will support the best outcomes for the students of Donald Primary School.

School Council take part in establishing and reviewing school priorities and policies; financial planning, evaluating school performance and facility planning.

We encourage parents to nominate for School Council and be involved in School Council working bees.

## UNIFORM

The Donald Primary School Uniform is available at The Clothes Bin or Donald Mensland.

We wear our uniform with pride .

Items of uniform include:

- Dress - fabric matching that of the Donald High School
- Navy or Grey shorts or Navy Skirt
- Navy or Black Track Pants or Grey Trousers
- Yellow Polo shirt (DPS logo preferred)
- Maroon Jumper– no hood allowed (DPS logo preferred)
- White or Black socks
- Wide Brimmed Maroon Hat (must be worn in Term 1 & 4)
- Sneakers or Black School shoes/sandals. Toes must be covered.

Refer to our Uniform Policy

We appreciate the partnership we have with our families in ensuring the school uniform requirements.

No jewellery apart from studs/sleepers and a watch are to be worn at school.

Students in grade 6 are able to purchase a personalised Shirt and Jumper for the year.

All hair longer than shoulder length must be tied back.