

# STAPS NEWSLETTER

Farewell for now, to our cuddler of babies and spoiler of dogs, Michelle. We were sad to see you walk out of the school gate this week but wish you all the best in your time away. Please enjoy Chan's signature 'Ode to Michelle', as a little memento of our very special Business Manager.



"As long as the students and the staff are happy, I'm happy" You might walk into St Andrews Primary School and be fooled into thinking the blonde haired, well presented lady behind the desk is there just for her smile.

Yet herein lies one of the most competent, fierce and loving ladies in the Business Manager world. Her reputation precedes her and ask anyone in the Nillumbik area about Michelle Commerford and they'd tell ya that she's one of the best. Yes STAPS is fortunate to have had one of the most incredible people behind the office desk for a long time.

Her relentless pursuit of student, staff and parent well being is an inspiration to everyone who is in a community facing role. How many times has she patched up the wound of a crying child, consoled someone distressed, talked down someone angry or hugged someone that needed it. The confident, capable, energy tempered by a warmth that envelopes all whom she helps. Her compassion is matched only by her controlled ferocity, there's no nonsense with Michelle, you get what you get and you don't get upset. If she believes it is right, it's going to happen. The defender of the new or substitute teacher who finds themselves at a loss when students sense weakness and push the boundaries. "Right you lot, you better shape up, that's not how we treat people!" "Yes Michelle." The power arm of the Principal who needs assistance sorting out an emergency or bills. "No, that's not good enough, we need the problem fixed now, there's kids here". The favourite human of all the neighbourhood dogs, even if it means they put on a few kgs when they're around her. In a world where we are increasingly putting our faith in technology and hyper efficient systemisation, Michelle stands as bulwark against the dehumanization of a culture.

Her honesty to herself and what she believes in, helps people gain comfort in her presence and feel real love. The kind of love that is pure and unfiltered, emanating forth with understanding and compassion. The kind of love that does not care what you've done or your past mistakes but believes in your humanity. "We are just people and we all deserve a second chance". Take a minute to look beyond her smile and you can see the tremendous wisdom and knowledge that has helped make this woman who she is. Michelle's eyes are deep and she'll unflinchingly stare into your soul and invite you into hers. She's not afraid of the connection, she understands it's the only way to truly know someone. Ask her about her troubles though and she'll dismiss you. Her strength and resolve born from years of doggedly moving through hardship whilst simultaneously living life to the fullest. "She'll be right, there's no time for focusing on the bad stuff". How do you do it? How do you keep that light alive and that drive to live a fulfilling life despite the tragedies and difficulties you've gone through? Perhaps it's by embracing one of the greatest aspects of what it means to be Australian, a real focus and grounding in the now. "There's no point in complaining, life goes on". To truly nestle that mentality so you can move through life's challenges and still provide a significant source of love, protection and guidance is simply inspirational and a lesson to us all.

Who is Michelle Commerford? Well she's a living legend and, damn it, we'll miss ya.



#### Contact Us

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St Andrews VIC 3761

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Website: [www.standrewsps.vic.edu.au](http://www.standrewsps.vic.edu.au)

# DIARY DATES TERM 1

<b>Public Holiday</b>	Mon 27th January
<b>Curriculum Day</b>	Tues 28th January
<b>First Day School (Years 1-6)</b>	Wed 29th January
<b>First Day Foundations</b>	Thursday 30th January
<b>Parent-Teacher Conferences</b>	Wed 12th and Thurs 13th February
<b>Seniors to Diamond Valley College</b>	Thu 20th Feb
<b>School Council</b>	Wed 19th February 4 pm
<b>Whole School Excursion to CERES</b>	Thu 27th Feb
<b>Twilight Sports</b>	Fri 28th February
<b>School Photos</b>	Wed 5th March
<b>Pancake Day</b>	Wed 5th March
<b>Seniors Information Night</b>	Wed 5th March
<b>Labour Day Holiday</b>	Mon 10th March <i>No School</i>
<b>Curriculum Day</b>	Tues 11th March <i>No School</i>
<b>Juniors Information Night</b>	Thursday 13th March
<b>NAPLAN Period (Years 3 &amp; 5)</b>	Beginning Wed 12th March
<b>School Council</b>	TBC Wed 19th March
<b>Somers Camp (Years 5&amp;6)</b>	Tues 18th - Wed 26th March
<b>Wadamubuk Mini Festival</b>	Sat 29th March
<b>Cultural Fair &amp; Learning Celebration</b>	Wed 2nd April
<b>Last Day Term 1</b>	Fri 4th April early finish - 2:25 pm

## TERM 2

**Term 2 begins** Tues 22nd April  
**ANZAC Day Holiday** Fri 25th April  
**King's Birthday Holiday** Mon 9th June  
**Last day Term** Fri 4th July

## TERM 3

**Term 3 begins** Mon 21st July  
**Last day Term 3** Fri 19th September

## TERM 4

**Term 4 for STAPS starts** Mon 6th October  
**Seniors Camp** Mon 20th to Wed 22nd October  
**Melbourne Cup Day Holiday** Tues 4th November  
**Last day Term 4** Fri 19th December 1:25 dismissal

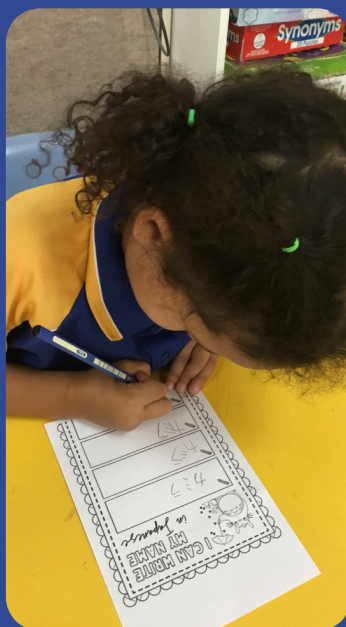
## Assemblies

Fortnightly  
Friday at 3pm  
7th and 21st February  
14th and 28th March



GOOD NEWS!

# Junior Learning Community



In the Junior Area, we have been getting to know each other through games and movement activities. The students have settled well into the new school year and forming friendships. Our new Foundation students have been buddied up with a Year 6 student so that they have someone to assist them if an adult is not available. The Buddy Program will run each Thursday afternoon where they will work together on different projects.

The Juniors have actively had a voice by voting for things that they would like in the classroom. They have agreed to have a bell chime for when I need their attention, and that helps our voices!

We have begun learning different sounds, /m/ and /s/ to start with, also numbers 1 and 2 representing them in different ways. The older students have been doing some revision of sounds, structure of a sentence, and 2-digit numbers whilst organising their tubs and equipment.

As a class, we have decided to set a goal of reading 100 books by the end of the term and we are well on our way with 23 books already read.

They are full of wonder and amazing ideas and I can't wait to see the growth over the year.

GOOD NEWS!

# Senior Learning Community



Welcome back to another big year of learning in the Senior Learning Community!

It has been an amazingly strong start from our senior students, and we have welcomed the new Year 3s into our Senior Learning Community.

Already we have made strong connections and building our values of being responsible courageous and caring by our interactions with each other through various teamwork activities. We are learning about the things we can and can't control in our lives and how to respond to how we feel.

As a group we are learning about the **power of yet** and how although we might know some things there are things that as we are learning may frustrate us but it just means we haven't learned it yet.

We are exploring what it means to be a leader and what we want from our leaders so that we all know what a good leader is as well as the fact that we are all leaders in one way or another. Please make sure you take the time to talk with us about what we're doing in our classroom, as this helps us with building upon the things we are learning.

**ATTENTION PLEASE!**

# Ritchies Community Benefit Program

Ritchies supports clubs, schools, and charities based on a percentage of your total shopping on eligible products.

**Follow the prompts when you sign up for free to nominate St Andrews Primary School VIC as your favourite recipient.**

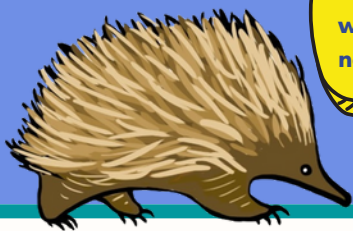
Register here:

<https://loyalty.ritchies.com.au/#/register>

Or download the Ritchies app to your phone here:

<https://loyalty.ritchies.com.au/share/index.html>

You can help raise funds for STAPS while you do your normal shopping!



Not only are you helping your club, school or charity, you'll also get extra benefits.

**BENEFITS:**

- Supporting clubs, schools and charities made easy
- Special offers and savings exclusive to members
- Digital Ritchies Card with an easy-to-use app
- Free to join – start saving instantly

**DON'T FORGET!**

## Breakfast Club

BREAKFAST CLUB Breakfast Club runs every Friday morning from 8:30 am. Free for all and all in the school community are welcome to join in!

## FREE ONLINE RESPECT WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Do you know what's influencing your kids? With young people spending so much time online, what they see and do can impact their behaviours and beliefs. Online disrespect is one of the ways violence-supportive attitudes can start to develop.

**Stop it at the Start** has partnered with *Tomorrow Man* and *Tomorrow Woman* to help parents, carers, and other significant adults of young people aged 10-17 better understand how the online world is influencing their views on respect and gender, and share practical ways they can build relationships and start important conversations.

Join facilitators Ryder Jack and Kasey Miles for a free interactive, evidence-based 90 minute workshop focused on connecting with young people, fostering healthier masculinity, and providing families with practical tools they can use day to day.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN  
**LET'S STOP IT AT THE START**



### Workshop dates

Tuesday, 18 February 2025, 7.00 – 8.30pm (AEDT)

Thursday, 27 February 2025, 7.00 – 8.30pm (AEDT)

[https://www.tomorrowman.com.au/respect-starts-now-workshops?utm\\_source=CIC\\_launch\\_edm&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=respect\\_workshop](https://www.tomorrowman.com.au/respect-starts-now-workshops?utm_source=CIC_launch_edm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=respect_workshop)

**REGISTER**





# Important Information

## OUT OF SCHOOL HOURS CARE

**Educator: Tracey Jones**

**Hours of Operation:** Tuesday – Friday  
7:00 – 8:45 am     3:30 – 6:00pm



**FOR OSHC BOOKINGS & INFORMATION**

call or text 0427 245 921 or 9710 1255

## Annual Privacy Reminder

... for our school community

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 on our website 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 will provide on how we use Microsoft 365/Google Workspace for Education 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/Google Workspace for Education, please contact the school.

**For more information about privacy, refer to: Schools' Privacy Policy.**



## DOGS IN THE SCHOOL PLAYGROUND

Whilst we understand that many families in our school community keep dogs as pets (and we are also welcoming Pumpkin into our school community) to ensure that our school remains a safe and inclusive place for everyone, we remind those who bring dogs to drop off and pickup that pet dogs should be leashed and in the control of a responsible adult.

# St Andrews Primary School

invites you to join in our

# Community Twilight Games

**FREE  
COMMUNITY  
EVENT!**

**Friday Feb 28th  
St Andrews PS,  
Caledonia St  
9710 1255**

**Free Face Painting  
Free Big Games**

**Go up against Community  
Groups in the Tug-of-War**

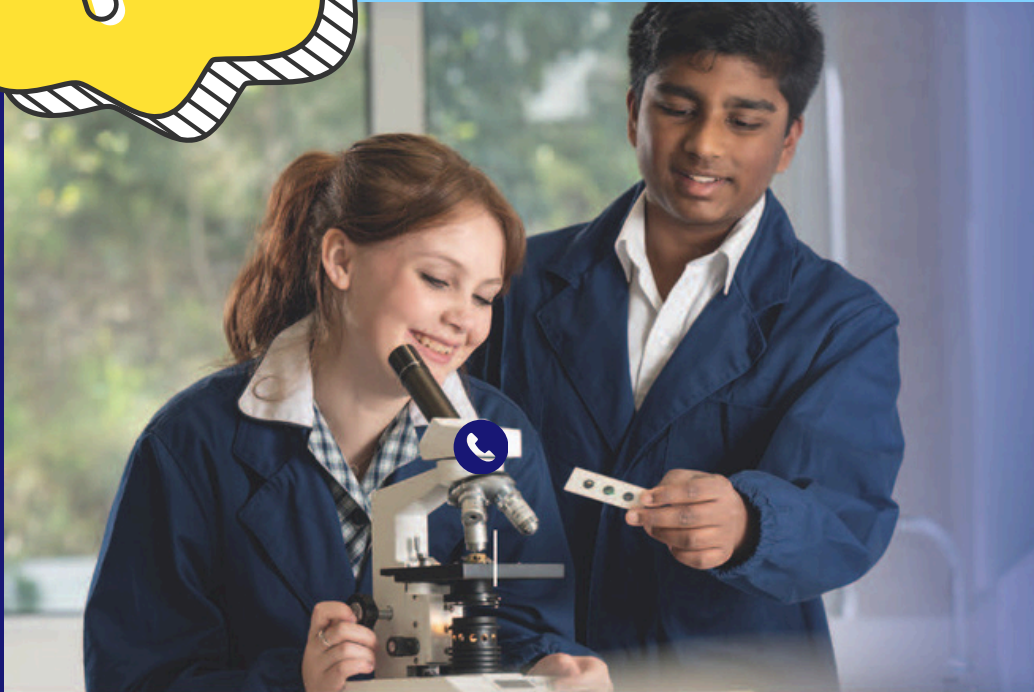
**BYO Picnic  
Sausage Sizzle, Drinks and  
cupcakes for sale**

**Bring your family, friends  
or community group**

**3 Legged Race  
Tennis Games  
Team relays  
Sack Race  
Boot Throw  
& more**

**Food and  
Activities from  
4:30 pm, events  
start 5:45 pm**

# Community News



## Interactive Open Afternoon

Thursday 27 March 2025

Auditorium, Diamond Valley College

Information sessions at 4:00, 4:45 and 5:30pm

*Join us to explore the endless opportunities  
awaiting your child in 2026!*

Bookings  
essential,  
please scan  
the QR code  
to book a  
session



## Semester 1 School Tours

*Tours are open to students and  
families considering secondary school  
commencing 2026. Bookings essential.*



**RESPECT | EXCELLENCE | RESPONSIBILITY**

165-179 Main Hurstbridge Rd, Diamond Creek VIC 3089

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

**DIAMOND  
VALLEY  
COLLEGE**



Hey kids, we had so much fun last series, we're making more episodes of **HARD QUIZ KIDS!**

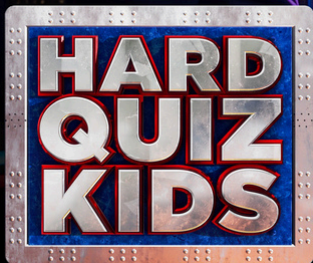
That's right, our last batch of contestants blew us away with some amazing topics like Aviation Disasters, Caterpillar Earthmovers, Ants, Babushka Dolls, The Norris Nuts, Space Travel, The Leadbeater's Possum and loads more.

So if you'll be in Year 5, 6 or 7 in 2025, no matter what your topic, if you know more about it than anyone else (and think you can be a bit cheeky if Tom tries to outsmart you), go ahead and apply to join the fun of **HARD QUIZ KIDS!**

**Just grab your parent or guardian and head to [hardquizkidsauditions.com.au](http://hardquizkidsauditions.com.au)**  
(You'll need an adult with you to fill out the application.)

Unfortunately, due to filming restrictions, applications for this series are only open to Victorian residents. Applications close midnight 23 February 2025.

Choose your topic, apply now and get ready to play, **HARD!**



**GREENSBOROUGH**  
  
**BASEBALL CLUB**

**Elder Street Reserve  
Watsonia**

*Boys & girls ages 4-17*

**\$60**  
Plus Registration

**Burras**  
**BASEBALL & TEEBALL**  
ROOKIE PROGRAM

**9am to 10am  
Every Saturday**

**Commencing  
Saturday  
22nd Feb**  
6 week Program

All equipment provided. Participants will be grouped by ability for safety.  
For more info contact [kenleesa@bigpond.com](mailto:kenleesa@bigpond.com) or visit our facebook page at [facebook.com/burrabaseball](https://facebook.com/burrabaseball)



AUSTRALIAN GIRLS CHOIR



## Is this your daughter?

Look no further than the Australian Girls Choir because we encourage, challenge and inspire girls as they learn to **sing, dance and perform.**

## Join us at our FEBRUARY OPEN DAY



AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS



AUSTRALIAN GIRLS CHOIR



## An experience that goes far beyond the stage!

Girls blossom as members of the AGC, both on and off the stage. Your daughter will develop confidence, self-esteem, public speaking and presentation skills, all while gaining friendships that will last a lifetime.

Our senior performers have shared the stage with a long list of artists including Hugh Jackman and Kylie Minogue and have performed at dazzling events including the Australian Open, Prime Minister's Olympic Dinner, Carols by Candlelight and Carols in the Domain. We're proud to have represented Qantas in the iconic 'I Still Call Australia Home' advertising campaigns for 26 years.

Now accepting enrolments for our rehearsal venues in Berwick, Box Hill, Caulfield North, Essendon, Glen Waverley, Greensborough, Heidelberg, Ivanhoe, Kew, Mentone, Ringwood and Yarraville.



QANTAS

## JOIN US AT OUR FEBRUARY OPEN DAY

Register now at [ausgirlschoir.com.au/joinagc](http://ausgirlschoir.com.au/joinagc) or phone 03 9859 6499



AUSTRALIAN SCHOOL OF PERFORMING ARTS



## MyTime Warrandyte

### Why MyTime?

MyTime is for parents and carers of a child with a disability, chronic medical condition or other additional needs including developmental delay.

#### FIND US AT:

Warrandyte Community Church  
57 Yarra Street  
Fridays, Fortnightly 9.30am - 11.30am

#### CONTACT:

Sue Batcheler - Facilitator  
Email: [suzanneb@mytimevic.com.au](mailto:suzanneb@mytimevic.com.au)  
Mobile: 0413 655 659

Unwind and  
share experiences  
with others who  
understand



[mytime.net.au](http://mytime.net.au)

**FRIDAY NIGHT  
LIVE @ ST ANDREWS**

Wadambuk St Andrews Community Centre  
35 Caledonia Street, St Andrews 3761

**28 FEB 2025**

**SARAH CARROLL  
WITH SHANNON BOURNE  
TICKETS \$25**

kids up to 14yo free

Doors open 6:30 pm Show 7 to 9 pm

BEER, WINE & LIMITED SPIRITS  
ON SALE  
NO BYO DRINKS  
Bring snacks & nibbles.



<https://events.humanitix.com/sarah-carroll-friday-night-live-st-andrews>

[www.standrewscommunitycentre.org](http://www.standrewscommunitycentre.org)



**WADAMBUK**  
St Andrews Community Centre



# Save the date!!



## Saturday 29th March 2025

## 1 pm to 5 pm