



Principal News – September 2026

Calling all parent volunteers for our Spring Fair!

Sunday October 18

Our much-loved **Spring Fair** is just around the corner, and we'd love your help to make it a wonderful day for our students, families, and school community!

There are lots of ways to get involved, whether you have an hour to spare on the day, can help with preparations beforehand, or would like to contribute a donation for one of our stalls. No experience is needed — just a little time, enthusiasm, and community spirit!

We're looking for volunteers to help with:

- Setting up
- Volunteering on stalls
- Helping with food and refreshments
- Supporting our silent raffle
- Donations of cakes, clothes, books, chocolates for the choc toss, drinks, silent raffle donations etc.
- Welcoming families and helping throughout the day
- Packing up and tidying at the end



Every helping hand makes a difference. Even if you can only volunteer for a short time, your support will help make the fair a success and create a memorable experience for our children.

If you're able to volunteer or would like to find out more, please contact the school or complete the volunteer sign up form.

Thank you to all of our wonderful parents and carers for supporting our school community. We can't wait to celebrate spring together!

Student Enrolments 2027

We are coming to the stage of arranging our class structure and class placements for 2027. If your child will not be attending Westgarth PS in 2027 and you have not informed the office, please do so as a matter of urgency. Our planning requires up-to-date student numbers, as we need to ensure all students are placed with someone they work well with, so late notification of a change of circumstance can impact the placement of other students. Your support with this is appreciated.

Minimum Compliance Audits

The school undergoes a range of compliance audits and reviews over time, including regular occupational health and safety and emergency management checks.

Every five years, the Department of Education conducts a comprehensive facilities audit to assess the condition of the school's buildings and grounds. This process identifies any works required, prioritises them, and determines the associated costs. The outcomes of the audit help inform the funding allocation the school receives for essential repair and maintenance works. Our next facilities assessment is taking place this term.

As part of the school review process, schools are also required to undergo a Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) review, together with a comprehensive Child Safe audit. As our school review is scheduled for the first half of next year, the VRQA and Child Safe audit will take place in October. These audits and reviews are important in ensuring that the school meets its compliance and regulatory obligations. They also provide an opportunity to identify areas for improvement.

Writer's Festival

There is something truly special about seeing children discover the joy of writing. This term, our school community came together to celebrate imagination, creativity and the wonderful stories our young writers have to tell at our inaugural Writers Festival.

Throughout the festival, students had the opportunity to meet authors and illustrators, listen to stories, explore different genres and take part in creative writing activities. From adventurous tales and hilarious characters to thoughtful poems and imaginative worlds, our students embraced the opportunity to let their ideas take flight.

The festival was not just about becoming a better writer; it was about discovering that every child has a story worth sharing. Students were encouraged to experiment with language, develop their own unique voices and, most importantly, have fun with words.

A highlight was seeing the excitement on students' faces as they shared their writing and talked about books and characters they love. Their



enthusiasm reminded us that a strong reading and writing culture begins with curiosity, confidence and a willingness to give things a go.

We would like to thank our visiting authors, illustrators, teachers and parent volunteers for helping make the festival such a memorable experience. Thank you to our specialist library teacher Stacey, for pulling the festival together. Most of all, we congratulate our students for their creativity, courage and enthusiasm.

We hope the festival has inspired many budding authors to keep reading, keep writing and keep imagining because the next great story might just be theirs!



Updated Policies

We have been reviewing and updating our policies in line with the regular review cycle and regulations change. Please see the Policies section of our website for many of our policies. [School Council Policies](#)

The latest to be updated are Child Safety and Wellbeing and Statement of Values and School Philosophy. We welcome any feedback via phone, email to the office Westgarth.ps@education.vic.gov.au or chat with Jo Wheeler (Principal).

Our journey to net zero

As you will know, for the past few years we have invited our community to make tax-deductible voluntary contributions through the Building Trust Fund to support the school's journey towards net zero.

This journey has taken time, and while we are not yet at net zero, we have made significant progress. I wanted to take this opportunity to share where we are at and, most importantly, thank our parent community for the support that has helped us get here.

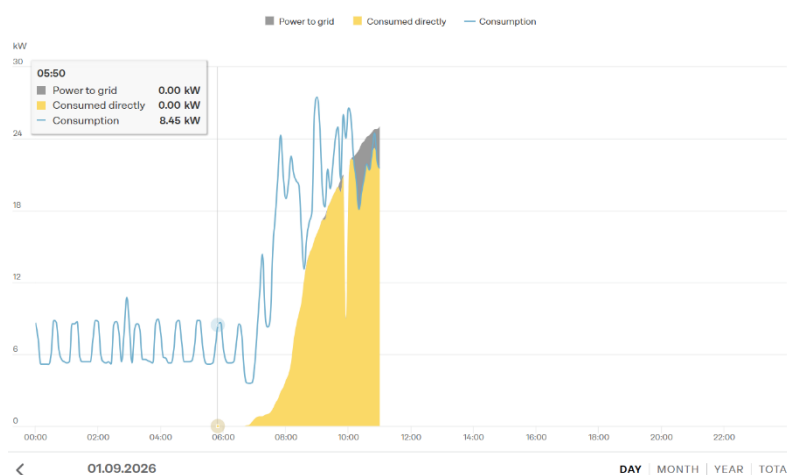
We have now **turned off gas at both school sites**. Achieving this required us to replace all gas heating and hot water services with reverse-cycle air conditioning systems — a significant investment in moving towards a more sustainable and energy-efficient school.

We have also:

- Upgraded the solar panel system in the WEB, funded by the VSBA.
- Installed new solar panels on the new building, also funded by the VSBA.
- Supported the kindergarten to connect its solar panels to the school's system, as the kindergarten's electricity is sourced through the school's meter.
- Successfully applied for departmental support to install a new **39kW solar system at the Brooke Street site**. This will be funded by the school over a 5 year period.

These are important steps towards reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, lowering our carbon footprint and creating a more sustainable future for our school.

We still have work to do to reach net zero, but the progress we have made is significant. **Thank you to our parent community for your generosity and continued support.** Your contributions through the Building Trust Fund have played an important role in helping us move towards this goal.



This diagram was a snapshot on 1 September

Preventing Racism

At Westgarth PS we value the diversity of culture, ethnicity, and faith of all our students. Everyone is welcome at our school.

Celebrating the diversity of our community makes us stronger, kinder and innovative. We are committed to ensuring that students from all backgrounds feel accepted, supported and are empowered to learn.

Westgarth Primary has taken steps to ensure the school is a place free of racism and where everyone feels welcome, respected and supported. To achieve our values and aims, everyone at Westgarth Primary plays an important role, and we are writing to ask for your support.

Westgarth Primary asks that you support your child/ren to:

- understand that we celebrate diversity and multicultural inclusion
- understand the importance of everyone at school being treated with respect
- understand that Westgarth Primary takes racism very seriously
- understand that the school will support students if they experience or see their classmates experience racism

Your partnership in reinforcing these values at home will significantly help create a more respectful and inclusive environment at school.

For more information, please see Racism: talking with children and teens, Raising Children Network.

If you or your child/ren have experienced racism or other unfair treatment, we are here to help. Talk to Ben Cunningham or Carolyn Shiels for further support. They can help you understand the school policies, access support and make a complaint.

If you don't feel comfortable reporting the incident to school, you can call or email the Report Racism hotline. The Department of Education runs the Report Racism hotline. It is available 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays) on [1800 722 476](tel:1800722476) or via email at report.racism@education.vic.gov.au.

If you need an interpreter to call the school, please use the details available at: [Guide for Families: How to use an interpreter to contact your school](#) (<https://go.vic.gov.au/4h9ivgm>)

Change of uniform provider

As you may be aware, our former uniform provider, AGS (trading as Aplus+), sold their business to Lowes. Over time, we experienced a number of issues with the quality and consistency of the uniforms, including concerns with colour, logo placement and other aspects of the finished garments.

When our agreement came up for renewal, we took the opportunity to review our options and made the decision to change uniform providers. We appreciate that this change has caused some disruption for families. Unfortunately, until the new agreement was finalised, we were unable to formally communicate or advertise the change.

We are pleased to now have a confirmed agreement with our new uniform provider, Bob Stewart, who have an excellent reputation for quality and service.

Families can purchase uniforms directly from their Kew store at 203–207 High Street, Kew. Online ordering is also available, with the option of:

- Delivery to your home for \$10; or
- Free delivery to the school once per week, for families to collect.

We sincerely hope this change will provide a more positive and consistent uniform experience for our families moving forward.

Please refer to the Compass notice sent on 1 September for full details, including information about ordering and the new uniform arrangements. We will also continue to run our FURS (free uniform recycle service) pop ups on a regular basis.



What's been happening?

Term three was always seen as the quietest of all terms on the school calendar, however that is not the case anymore. We have had so much happening across the school and I would like to thank the teachers, education support staff and parent volunteers who have organised and supported the various events and activities. I have no doubt missed some things but here is a quick snapshot of what has been happening or is coming up this term:

- Naidoc week
- State cross country
- Writer's Festival activities and Showcase
- Book Week Parade and cross-age activities
- Trivia Night (adults only)
- LifeChanger (4 weeks) – mental health & wellbeing linked to Yr 7 transition (year 6)
- Division netball and soccer (qualifying year 4 – 6 students)
- Australian Maths Competition (year 2 – 6)
- Year 6 sports gala day
- Year 6 Market Manoeuvres incursion
- Year 4 camp – Phillip Island
- Prep incursion – Learning by doing
- 100 days of prep
- Year 2 incursion – The Past in your Class (related to inquiry unit)
- National Week of Action – Bullying – No Way! (whole school)
- Wear it purple day (whole school)
- Discos (years 3 – 6)
- Year 2 excursion to Bundoora Park
- Footy colours day
- Class inquiry expo yr 1/2 and Prep (Toys)
- Year 3 Netball clinics
- Writer's workshop for preps
- Year 3 UR Strong friendship workshop

- Year 1 Create it! incursion
- Year 5 Yarning Wurundjeri school session in preparation for the Yarning Conference in October
- Compliance processes (Emergency management, Condition Assessment, OSHC quality rating process, Child Safe and Registration assessment preparation)
- Twisted science excursion (Yr 1)

Lost property

As the weather heats up the students peel off their jumpers when playing outside. It is now that our lost property bins move to overflowing. Please write your child's name on any outer wear so it can be returned to them if they leave it in the yard or another classroom. Also check with them at pick up times to ensure they have it with them.

Year 4 Camp

Our Year 4 headed off to camp this morning. Parents and carers can stay up to date on what is happening on camp via Compass. Thanks to staff Kat, Bel, Sam, Paul, Mark, Hannah, Ruby, Blake and Dallas who will be attending camp from Wednesday to Friday. Our students are lucky to have staff who are willing to take time away from their own family to provide this extra-curricular experience.

School Council Report

– Jason van Grieken (School Council President)

The last School Council meeting was held onsite at 7pm on Wednesday 2 September.

Principal's Report – Topics discussed: Child Safety, praise from the health department on the school's management of the Meningococcal episode, Hire of the Gym – progress on the process, OSHC VECRA requirements for Child Safe training for School Councillors.

Finance – The Finance Committee meet monthly to discuss the previous month's financials. Detailed financial reports are provided to committee members for review and discussion. The committee is happy to report that our positive cash flow allows us to meet our financial budget commitments for both revenue and expenditure. Changes to the RBA policy regarding credit card payments as well as increases to staff pay through the new agreement will influence OSHC fees in 2027.

Environment – The environment committee met on Wednesday 19 August. A hiccup with the solar system on Clarke St has been resolved and we are now producing a lot of the school's electricity needs. We also discussed options for more greening on Clarke St, additional bike parking for Brooke St, and universal accessibility for Clarke St. If you would like to join the Environment committee, please email the school Westgarth.ps@education.vic.gov.au so we can add you to the distribution list.

OSHC –

- Assessment and Rating was conducted and successful with an overall rating of "Meeting"
- OHSC Will be updating our software from the old Qikkids and Myfamily Lounge to the New Xplor Software.
- All the educators at Westgarth OSHC would like to thank the Westgarth community for all their kind appreciation letters for OSHC educator day your support and feedback is Amazing!
- Our OSHC pet wall is still looking to be filled if you have a pet to display here at OSHC please send your pictures through to oshc.westgarth.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Fun & Fundraising – Trivia was noted as a success. FaF have completed all standard four events for the year, and the fete/fair is organised by its own team that sits outside of the FaF.

Next meeting dates:

OSHC	6 October 10.30am WebEx
Finance	Thursday 8 October 10am WebEx
Environment	Wednesday 28 October 8am Jo's Office
Fun & Fundraising	TBC 8pm online
Hire of Facilities working party	15 September 8.30 am Jo's office
School Council	Wednesday 14 October 7pm staffroom

If you would like to join a sub-committee, please contact the office so we can pass on your details to the convenors of the sub-committees so you can receive the correspondence and meeting invites.

Jo Wheeler - Principal